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OCTOBER 1978/$2.25

THE NATIONAL MAGAZINE ABOUT MEN

blueboy

blueboy interviews:
actor PERRY KING
and novelist
JAMES PURDY

exclusive
PARIS & MILAN
fashion report

folk tales
of the
ARABIAN KNIGHTS

how to
measure up
to the new
METRIC SYSTEM

PLUS: a guide
to Ottawa ...
and lovers in
bondage
(fiction)

20 pages of
DUDES AND
THEIR DREAMS
(centerfold section)

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It's all in their new album

Macho Man

From the group who brought you

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CAN'T STOP PRODUCTIONS INC.

on Casablanca Record and FilmWorks, Inc.

COMMENTARY

A GUEST EDITORIAL

In order to develop a continuing, meaningful dialogue between our readers and the community-at-large, we are inviting prominent, responsible spokespersons to share their views on America's changing lifestyle. Inquiries and responses should be directed to Commentary, Blueboy Magazine, 185 N.E. 166th St., Miami, Fla. 33162.

TOWARD A NEW GAY MORALITY Or, The Day The Fist-Fucking Stops

BY JAMES TYSON

Not so long ago, most of us were leading lonely, isolated lives well and truly in the proverbial closet, and now, less than ten years later, people are getting rich out of crisco sales alone. A fortune's being made in amyl nitrite, and some of the gadgets being sold at a sex shop in New York City's Greenwich Village put the Marquis de Sade in the same category as Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm. And, indeed, why not? It's all a matter of supply and demand, and if those sex aids work and make you feel better, why knock it? However, it might be nicer if we didn't *need* them, but who lives in Nirvana?

There's been a sexual revolution, if you believe in sexual revolutions; certainly people of all sexual persuasions are getting more sex than they were during the repressive days of the '50s when it was almost as hard to be heterosexual as it was to be homosexual. But are we any happier? Is our sexual prowess contributing towards our personal growth? Or are we merely becoming bored, jaded and callous? Are we suffering from what *The Village Voice* referred to as "narcissistic privatism"? One can understand that after the repressiveness of the recent past, straight people want to get their rocks off at Plato's Retreat, and gay people want to do the same thing in back-room bars, but sooner or later, the fist-fucking will end, and where do we go from there?

Perhaps for the first time in history, heterosexuals and homosexuals are in the same boat, confronting some of the same dilemmas and feeling a little bewildered. It may be perplexing, but it's a good place to start because integration, whether it's racial or sexual, will ultimately make for a happier, healthier society. It used to be gay people who complained of being lonely and misunderstood. One cannot speak for the whole country, but New York is a singles city; whatever your sexual preference may be, seven out of 10 people live alone — and most of them hate it. We're all having a hard time connecting, and some of us are kidding ourselves that we don't even want to.

During 1976, more Americans got divorced than got married which was probably a good thing in many cases because most of them were bad marriages. (How many people know that that sexual libertine D.H. Lawrence made his wife Freida walk six paces behind him?) However, recent divorce statistics don't mean that marriage is finished; they merely suggest that heterosexuals are re-examining it as an institution and having a new look at the whole question of relationships and the problems they pose.

There will always be gay bars and gay discos and exclusively gay activities. But, with any luck, we'll be able to shed our ghetto mentality and feel sufficiently self-confident and at home in society to relax and be people, as opposed to homosexuals.

Love is often a four-letter word spelled n-e-e-d, and dependency relationships are damaging to both parties, and to the children if there are any. People who live together must maintain some degree of independence if they are to preserve their sense of identity and protect their egos. Having different friends and individual interests and activities — remember the Separate Vacations that modern couples used to having during the '50s — make for a more interesting relationship. The couple has something to talk about. Otherwise the relationship becomes boring, even painful, like an ingrown toenail, and gradually the lovers cease to be attractive to each other, even physically. Often when two people become *one*, what you have at best is two *half* persons, and when a couple decides to *share* their lives, the end product may be two *half* lives. They can always split, of course — why not, everybody else has? — and then go on to another boring, claustrophobic relationship. Fortunately, there are other options.

We are all social animals. We came down out of the trees long enough ago to take "pair bonding" for granted, although some people, admittedly, are too neurotic to handle it (fortunately, most of them know it, which is a comforting thought for those of us who can). Singleness is not smart, it's senseless, and the time has come for many gay people to come to terms with the fact that avoiding commitment is not necessarily chic. On the other hand, one must not fall into the trap of believing that having a relationship is the be-all and end-all of existence, that being alone means that you and your life are a failure; it's perfectly possible to be single and lead an effective and fulfilling life. Maybe you don't *want* a relationship; not everybody does. What is tragic is those of us who *do* and *can't* or *won't*.

Anybody who thinks that having a relationship is easy has been watching too much of *The Muppets*. It requires work, compromise, concessions have to be made and, inevitably, sacrifices; one loses a lot of "freedom," but what one loses on the swings, one gains on the merry-go-round. There's a great deal to be said for having the only set of keys to your front door, but it's also nice having somebody to come home to. When "the hating" sets in, the relationship can be terminated, and that doesn't have to be nasty and painful; it can be adult and civilized, and the lovers can even remain good friends. One of the plus factors of being gay is that relationships can be dissolved without all that tedious heterosexual paper work. Of course, there are times when a traumatic parting can be fun, deciding who gets custody of the cats, sawing the stereo in half, becoming emotional over the pots and pans.

(Continued on page 17)

Key West House Parties

DECEMBER 24 TO JANUARY 1, 1979:
CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR'S PARTY

FEBRUARY 18 TO 26, 1979:
WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

Since 1974 we have arranged our enormously successful winter house parties annually to Bequia and Grenada in the Caribbean. They were wonderfully popular and enjoyable, and although these islands are rather distant and inaccessible, hundreds of men considered it well worth the travel time and effort to join our informal, relaxed groups.

However, last year we visited Key West three times and became convinced that this cheerful tropical island with its easy-going ways is a more congenial place for our house parties — as well as being much nearer and less costly to reach by air.

For our house parties in the winter of 1978/79 we have taken over entirely the most delightful of Key West's guest houses, with a large swimming pool; and our arrangements include a boat excursion to the uninhabited Marquesas Islands, and seasonal festivities. Each house party is limited to 24 men plus our resident host.

Our other popular travel programs for men include the Thanksgiving Day Weekend in Haiti; and in 1979 we repeat the *Ski a là Francaise* tour to Megêve in January, the Carnival in Rio tour in February, the Greek Villa Party in June, the Grand Canyon Expedition and the Inca Tour with Machu Picchu in July, and we also again offer our history-making cruise to the fascinating Galapagos Islands, in August.

If you let us know in which programs you are interested, we will send the brochures to you. Please state that you saw this advertisement in Blueboy.

HANNS EBENSTEN TRAVEL, INC
55 WEST 42 STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10036
TELEPHONE (212) 354-6634

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Art Director/Vice President
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Editor
BRUCE FITZGERALD

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Advertising Sales Offices

Advertising Director
HAL DE MUN

Classified Advertising Mgr.
WALTER H. VAN THIEL

185 N.E. 166 Street, Miami, FL 33162
(305) 940-1377

National Account Representatives
MC GOWAN & ASSOCIATES, INC.
630 Third Avenue,
New York, N.Y. 10017
(212) 986-5157

Local Advertising Sales
GREG EDWARDS
4 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016
(212) 889-8120

West Coast Sales Representative
ROBERT IMPERIAL
13906 Ventura Blvd.
Box 142
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403
(213) 990-5727

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Cover Photographed by Alex Sanchez

BLUEBOY THE NATIONAL MAGAZINE ABOUT MEN

THE CREAM

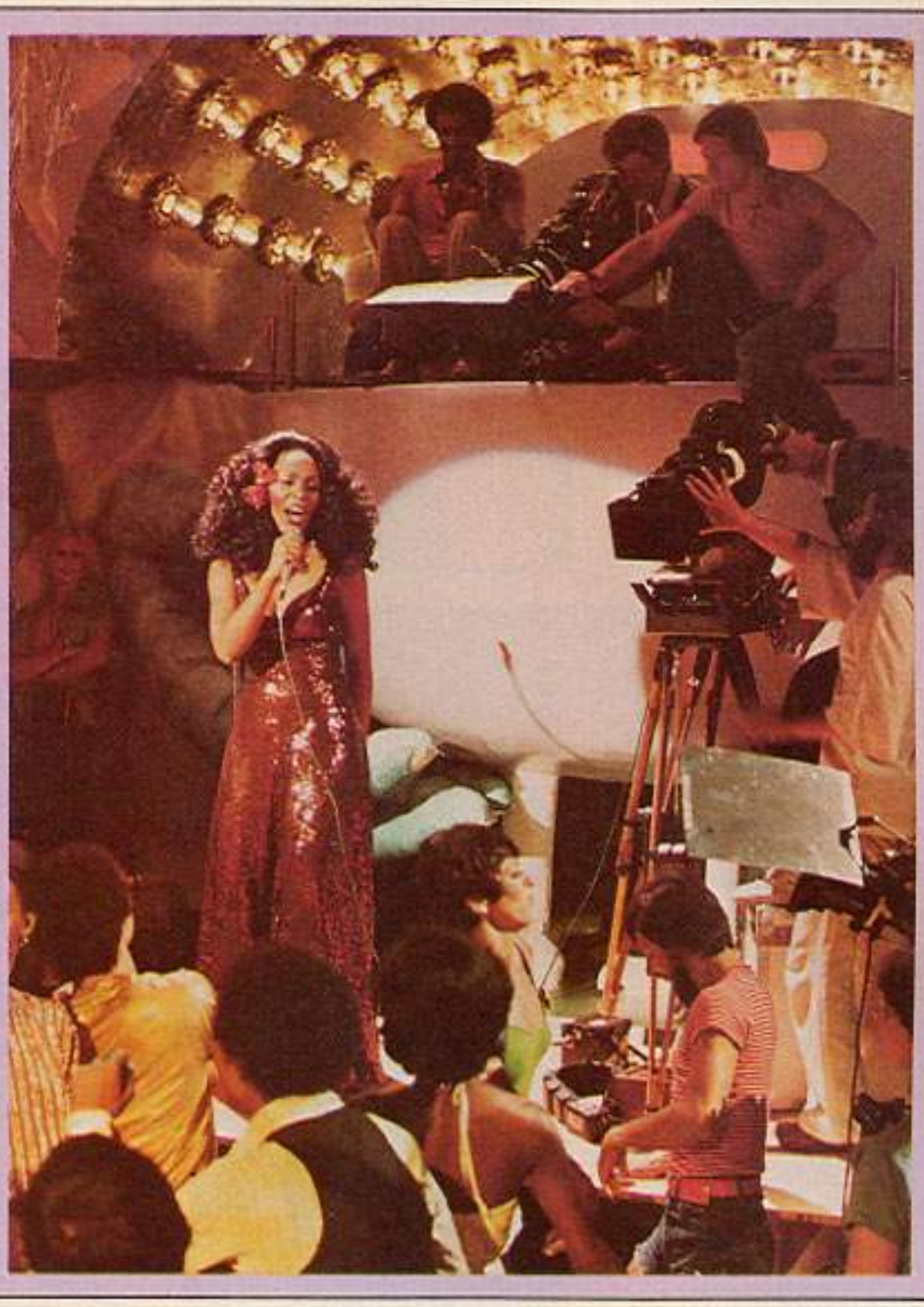
THANK GOD IT'S FRIDAY
Original Soundtrack
(Casablanca)

Here it is, the album to succeed *Saturday Night Fever.* TGIF is an all-star extravaganza destined to become one of the all-time best sellers. Like *Saturday Night Fever, TGIF* is the soundtrack recording to a disco movie. Like *SNF, TGIF* contains music not only from the home label, but from guest artists as well. In this case the home label is Casablanca, whose participating artists include Donna Summer, Paul Jabara, Love and Kisses, Santa Esmerelda, Sunshine, D.C. LaRue, and Pattie Brooks. The guest artists from the Motown label include Diana Ross, The Commodores, and Thelma Houston.

Casablanca president Neil Bogart must have issued a memo to all the acts in his stable of disco stars requesting each to put forth with its finest work. Because that is exactly what he got and in turn released as a multi-sided package.

Standout cuts are Pattie Brooks' monster hit, "After Dark" and the title cut, a disco masterpiece performed by Love and Kisses; "Take it to the Zoo", a funky piece of dance music written by Donna Summer and performed by Sunshine, and most notably the closing cut, "Last Dance," written by Paul Jabara for the company mascot, Donna Summer, who delivers a spectacular vocal performance in what is unquestionably her finest moment on vinyl.

TGIF is a five-sided package record set. Side five is a special bonus 12" single — and everyone loves a 12" bonus, especially when it's single.



DAVID JOHANSEN
BLUESKY
(CBS)

Here's the real bad boy of records. Originally the lead singer of the notorious and now mercifully defunct New York Dolls (who wreaked havoc wherever they performed), Johansen carries his impersonation of Mick Jagger to an even greater degree of likeness. The music critics of America have hailed this album as "a masterpiece," "a personal triumph," "a revelation." To me it sounds just like the crude, loud, non-music of the early (what the hell, and *late*) Rolling Stones. I was never a fan, but the rest of the world thinks Mick Jagger is the best thing since chocolate cake. If you fit into this category, you'll love David Johansen.

CARLY SIMON
BOYS IN THE TREES
(Elektra)

She's neither a media hypster, a national rage, nor a star on the rise. She's a quiet, established rocker, mother and wife. So whodathunk Carly Simon would be the one to come out with what looks (so far) like the pop album of the year?

If somewhat patchy and uneven, *Boys in the Trees* is still her finest work to date, a showcase for the unique vocal abilities and songwriting talents that are Simon's. She still can't hold a note — her vowels wobble — but oh, what she can do to a consonant. What she lacks in her attempt at poignant singing and songwriting (Joni Mitchell and Laura Nyro are immeasurably better at it), she more than makes up for with an incredible ability to use her voice as an instrument that can bounce in syncopated rhythms through a fast-paced rocker. The high point on the album comes on "Tranquillo," which opens the second side. With her own back-up harmonies, she sings "let it go, let it go," repeating it ten times, then going into a key change as she reads the next line, "melt my heart."

The best songwriting on the album is not by Carly but by her husband James Taylor in "One Man Woman." "... now in the place I come from, people don't grow on trees/and you can't treat people like meat/without being brought to your knees/now and then ..."

Expertly produced by Arif Marden, this record contains some of the tightest musicianship found on any recent release.

SOUR CREAM
HELEN REDDY
WE'LL SING IN THE SUNSHINE
(Capitol)

I can put my personal tastes aside and be objective about records like David Johansen and *Grease*, but in no way can I find any redeeming quality in this album.

What I learned from listening to this album (and from reading the credits) is that Helen is not alone in this — merely the figure-head for a network conspiracy to kill music. Her lack of talent, charisma, or a singing voice is amply backed by equally uninspired musicianship and arrangements with the intensity of Muzak. Under her producer, co-producer and arrangers, she lists herself as "the bottom line." I'm glad *she* said it.

Despite the beautiful Scavullo portrait that graces the cover (Helen even set her hair), the record fails miserably. I thought it would be impossible for *anyone* to do a bad job of "We'll Sing in the Sunshine," a song that became something of a '60s love anthem, but alas, La Reddy has achieved the impossible!

RINGO STARR
BAD BOY
(Portrait, CBS)

This is an album with the social and political import of a can of beer. Nothing heavy, nothing profound. Just good clean fun. The music is the kind you'd hear on a rainy Saturday afternoon shooting pool in the bar with the boys. *Bad Boy* continues to perpetuate the image Ringo has of himself: Smart-ass, tough, and altogether likeable. "Heart on my Sleeve" and "Lipstick Traces" are standouts, and the nicest thing on the album is "Tonight."

GREASE
Original Soundtrack (RSO)

Billed as a musical "celebration, *Grease* is a fix for '50s nostalgia junkies. A throw-back to the Annette/Frankie Avalon days, it's fun, happy, pointless entertainment. Too bad that John Travolta can't sing as well as he dances, because it leaves the album a little flat. But the Stigwood Organization has taken little chance. In an attempt to capture some of the wild, hit-making quality of The Bee Gee's, they had Barry Gibb write and produce a title tune that is sung on the record (as, presumably, in the film) by Gibb's falsetto prodecessor, Frankie Valli.

Olivia Newton-John is perfectly cast (vocally) as a Sandra Dee/Doris Day type. That's Dee Day!

Harmless listening.

Her Second... His Third... Their First!

giorgio and chris

LOVE'S IN YOU, LOVE'S IN ME

NBLP 7104

Giorgio Moroder, the producer, and
Chris Bennett, the singer,
combine their talents on their debut duet.

LOVE'S IN YOU, LOVE'S IN ME

on Casablanca Record and FilmWorks
Produced by Giorgio Moroder and Pete Bellotte

Casablanca Record and FilmWorks

CIVILIZED ATTITUDES

As a subscriber, I want to congratulate you on the very interesting and heartbreaking article, "The Ballad of Mark," by Robert Hudson. To me, this story seems of more interest than just a short article. It doesn't seem fair for his family to blame Melvin Lyman, his guru, entirely — when he was so vastly troubled and disturbed long before he met him. So many people don't realize the great responsibility of having children. Just spawning them and leaving them to their own devices is very irresponsible. They need loving care, understanding and, above all, guidance and direction. Was Mark given all this? I think it is important to know to prevent future tragedies.

Of course there is no excuse for bank robbery — none whatsoever. Where his guru failed him was in not helping him after he landed in jail. This, too, is unforgivable. Also, there still seems a question as to the exact manner of his death.

I also applaud Marcello Mastroianni's civilized attitude toward homosexuality. More Americans should emulate him.

G.D., Ellsworth, Maine

THE PICTURE OF LAWRENCE OF ARABIA

The illustration in the July issue of *Blueboy* by Mel Odom deserves more than mere praise.

Brian Scott Carr, New York

PLASTIC CAMEOS

For months now I have watched your magazine going through the usual changes from infancy to adolescence. And, like those changes, I've noticed a subtle trend to the cocky, esoteric, trendy and jaded plastic cameos of so-called sophistication. Sincerity has its merits, namely loyalty. Mine is fading. To be specific: Nudes under sheets are an esthetic charm, but somehow lose punch compared to more graphic, erotic photos. I tried to be stimulated, but couldn't manage it. Please, slow down on the *GQ* trend. It's tack in disguise.

Casey Foley, Laurel, MD

SO IMPRESSED

After one year of regularly purchasing "gay" magazines, I have to say I have never been so impressed with a magazine like *Blueboy*. Your quality keeps improving beyond all expectations. Quality in articles, layouts, models, reproduction of pictures, advertising, etc. I have never been compelled to write to a magazine before; but, then again, I have never been this impressed before. And, believe me, I'm very hard to please. But you have done it. Your "Wet Section" was one of the most devastatingly beautiful and classy pictorials I have ever seen. Keep up the good work! We need you — a quality magazine, with our point of view, done with extremely good taste and something we can all be proud of. Hats off to *Blueboy*!

R.V., Indiana

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Years ago, I used Intensive Care Lotion as a lubricant, but the irony of that brand name finally got to me. I switched to a grocery store product, without a fancy name, which cost less and sacrifices neither intensity nor care. No, this is not another letter about lubricants; it's about ironies. Ironies which amuse me, but more often disturb me.

It seems ironic that conservatives use the name of Christianity to deny gay people equal protection in written laws. It seems ironic that a coalition meeting in Washington D.C. last April to discuss the formation of a New Left, would refuse to include gay issues. It seems ironic that the next California ballot will include an initiative that will blatantly discriminate against gay people in teaching positions.

I think Richard Pryor had a valid point to make when he tactlessly insulted the gay community at the Hollywood Bowl. The point: where were we before the Watts riot? Where were we on the night Dr. King was shot? Fifteen years ago where did we sit on the buses in Selma and Birmingham? There is the legitimate argument that we, as gays, were not visible then. But where are we now?

The most important social improvement of this decade is not the gay movement. That description belongs to Women's Liberation. Their movement has worked longer and harder, has been better organized, and potentially effects the personal liberties of more individuals than does our struggle.

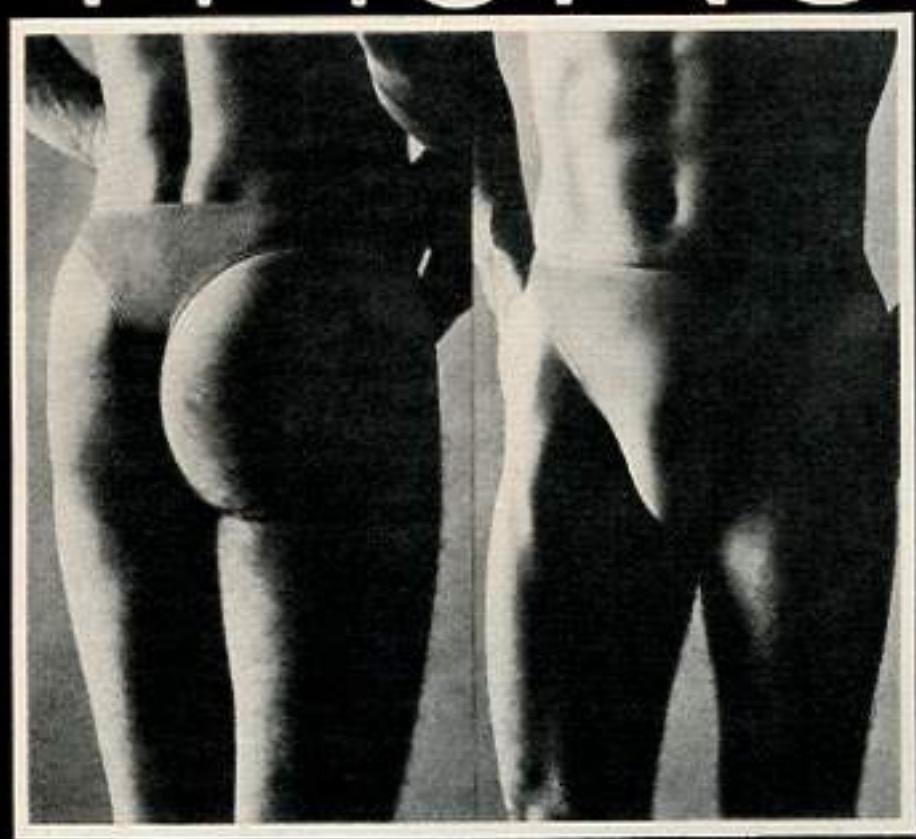
Oh yes, they are ironies here, too. When lesbians took an active role in N.O.W., they polarized and almost paralyzed that organization. A familiar emotional tactic of anti-E.R.A. speakers is to threaten that its passage would legitimize homosexual marriages. And while America's consciousness is being raised, little by little, we adapt our lifestyles to becoming sexy while paying little thought to becoming sexists.

Is my macho showing? My army boots, my lumberman shirts, my leather jacket — do these make me a sexist? I frequent backroom bars in New York City, the bars on Folsom St. in San Francisco, drink beer from phallic shaped bottles, understand that my first impressions of others are always sexual.

Let us not mistake macho garb for sexist garbage. But are we being sexist when we refuse to offer support to the issues of day care centers, abortions and the passage of the E.R.A.? I know these issues don't effect our personal lives. After all, they only involve questions of freedom, liberty, and the right to live one's life as she/he chooses. (Has a rather ironic ring to it, put that way.)

Gay Pride celebrations have a wonderful, uplifting, almost revival-like quality about them. Despite the political setbacks of last spring, it's nice to see gay people take pride in themselves and our movement, but it's also important to measure the strength and support of non-gay contingencies. In marches from

THE ORIGINAL
THONG



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Enclose check payable to Lily of France

Los Angeles to New York City, in votes from Dade County to Eugene, Oregon, we cannot win our battles alone. And this is the greatest irony: How can we expect others to help us if we don't show our support for them?

Patrick Collins
San Francisco, Ca.

PRINCIPLES OF LIBERATION

It was with interest that I read Hanns Ebensten's article in June *Blueboy*, "Two Summer Places Abroad." In general, the article was entertaining and informative. I found somewhat amusing and creative the symbolicaly erotic graphic design and artwork on pages 70-71. I entertained some fantasies as to where I would go, if I had the money. Later on, I tuned into the WGBH-PBS program (aired in this area June 1, 1978), *WORLD* — "Who Pays For Paradise?" The pro-

gram points plainly that third world nations do not benefit from Euro-American tourism. Euro-American business firms build large, tax exempt complexes promising to lure industry and jobs for emerging nations. The only jobs that materialize are those of exploited menial laborers and cheap prostitutes. Food is often imported from other countries, defeating even the chance for expansion of the local agrarian economy. This may be so in Tahiti. To quote Ebensten, "... meals are excellent, though costly, as most ingredients are shipped from France."

For those embracing the principles of liberation — gay, women's, Third World or whatever — there is no easy solution to this moral and political-economic dilemma.

As Gay Americans, perhaps we can set an example for the rest of the world tourists. We can investigate before we buy that plane or ship ticket. Ask pertinent questions: Who owns the hotels, discos etc.? Are these places natively owned, or owned and controlled by foreign businesses? Once in a Third World country, we can inquire where a

souvenir was made before we buy it. We can refuse to patronize any but native craftsmen and businesses. We can make an effort to see the poor of Third World countries as oppressed human beings, who have something in common with us. We can visit the local schools, and learn something of a peoples' culture and values.

I don't know if these are all the answers or even some of the answers. After viewing one PBS documentary I will not profess to be expert on Third World Tourism. Perhaps in another issue, Mr. Ebensten will include information on tropical places where the money is channeled into the local economy. In-depth information on local gay customs would also be appreciated; what may be acceptable in Europe or America may be demeaning in Haiti, Jamaica, Senegal or some other land (even in Europe!).

K.B., South Carolina

WHAT'S BEHIND

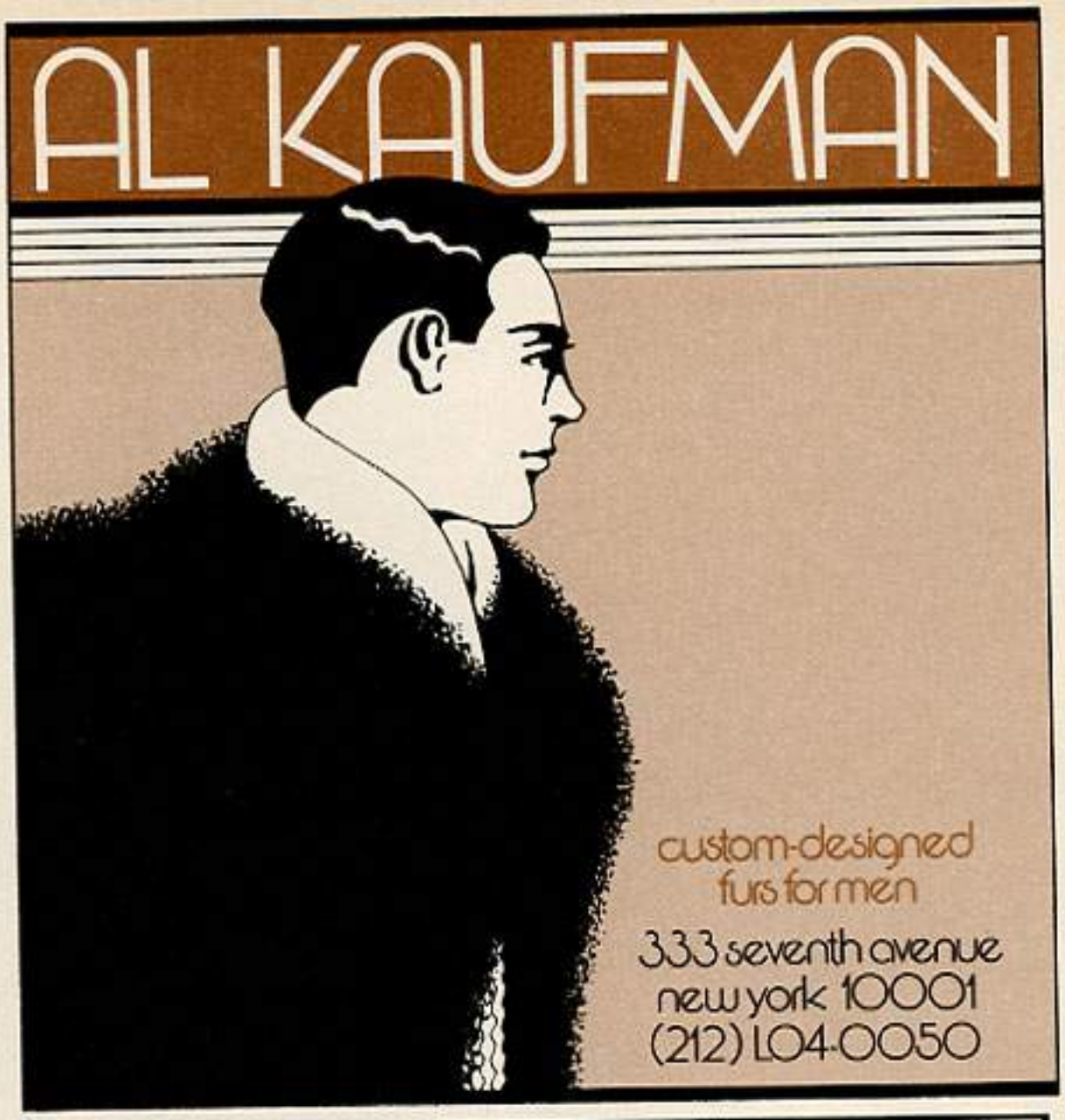
As usual, *Blueboy* — the best of male publications — offers slick editing, interesting articles and beautiful photographs. So many good things, in fact, that I wonder if on the way you did not forget to be sexy. Cocks are OK, but I think many of your readers would not mind to admire what's behind. Literally! Especially if it's well-spread.

M.G., Montreal

"FOR WOMEN ONLY"

Your publication, *For Women Only*, is the first male pictorial I've paid for and brought home. All the others stay on the rack. Most publications intended for women are packed with ads and have only a few pictures. I like my men strong and sexy and not ashamed to show themselves — your men have nothing to be ashamed of. I think you deserve a great compliment for putting out a magazine for real women that know what

(Continued on page 14)



WARM WISHES

One of the beautiful things from the pages of our holiday catalogue, a silk blend cable stitched sweater (Sizes: S-M-L-XL, #8687A 47.35 including shipping). Our catalogues can be yours free ten times a year if you send us the coupon below.

THE HORCHOW COLLECTION

P.O. Box 34257, Dept. 44002, Dallas, Texas 75234

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City _____

State / Zip _____

BODY**GUARDS**

by Tom Battaglia

That masked man on the facing page is getting one of the easiest and best pick-me-ups of the season. Cool facials are hot this year, and making a snack from the mask ingredients gets a load of vitamins into the body while the face is using them on the surface. Start with a large cucumber; wash it well to remove the waxy layer that coats it, then peel it and slice. The thinnest pieces work best as they will adhere more securely to the contours of your face. Lie down and place the slices around and over the eyes, especially when you want to relieve the redness and swelling of sun-baked eyelids. You may also do the complete facial by layering the cucumber over the entire face and neck area. Relax for a cool ten minutes while munching (gently) on the remaining slices. Rinse with very cool water.

COOL AS A CUCUMBER

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALEXANDER BANES

If you like the Island, you'll love the Village:

Roxbury Run Village.

80-percent mortgages available to financially qualified buyers.
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All this, only a short drive from the arts and crafts of Woodstock. The glorious sounds of Tanglewood. The temptations of auctions and antique shops. The unhurried pleasures of country dining.

Come see whether life is worth living without all this, all year! At Exit 19 of the N.Y. Thruway, go West on Rt. 28 to Arkville. Then North on Rt. 30 to Denver, N.Y.

TO: Roxbury Run Village, Denver, N.Y. 12421. Telephone: (212) 594-1670.

_____ Please send me complete information on the Village, including mortgage financing and homeowners' total-care exterior-maintenance package.

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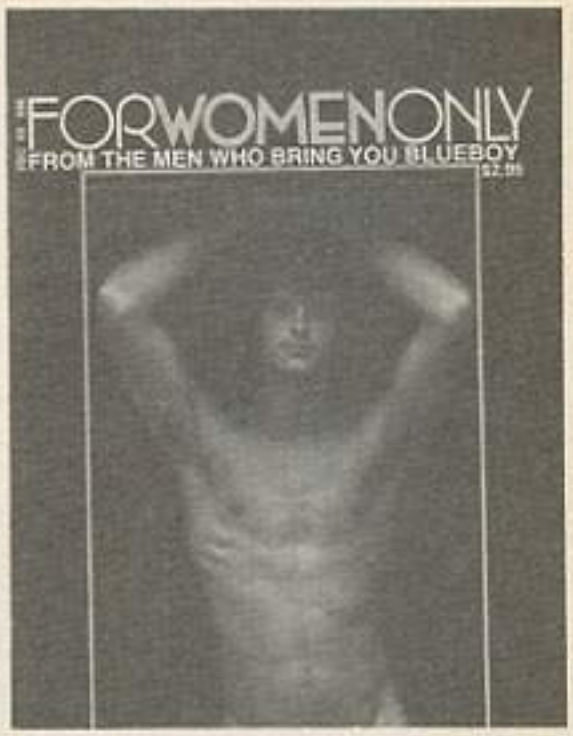
_____ I have to see all this for myself. Phone me at (AREA CODE) _____ (NUMBER) _____.

I'm easiest to reach at _____ a.m. or _____ p.m.

This advertisement is not an offering in the Roxbury Run Village Association, Inc., which may be made only by formal prospectus.

MAILMAN

(Continued from page 11)



they really like. Keep up the good work — and the same to your male studs.

D.S., Highlands, Texas

A GIFT FROM HEAVEN

I am writing this letter to let you know how much I love your magazine. You employ the foxiest models and your articles are fantastic! I am not a homosexual — I love women as much as men — but it's nice to know that many men do think about the enormous pleasure another man can give them. All my life I have wondered if I was an outcast, but your magazine proves that untrue. I can't stress enough how much your magazine has helped my mind and body. It's great when you can use a magazine like that. I consider *Blueboy* a gift from heaven. Thank you for saving my life and making it 169% better.

R.L., Colorado

GAY AND CONSERVATIVE

Bruce Werner's article "Guilt" (Blueboy, May 1978) is just another example of how some gays first explain away, almost apologetically, and then tout the kinkiness trend that they indicate is the wave of the future for sexuality. Invariably, the implication slips in that those of us who don't enjoy shit instead of peanut butter in our sandwiches, or piss instead of lemonade or cider are missing something revolutionary.

Somehow, "gay pride" seems to get worked more into the latest in experimental sexuality than into a concern over the quality of interpersonal relationships. Aren't love and respect taking a backseat to degradation and exploitation in today's America?

And for Werner to tell us that "they're" doing it, too, doesn't lessen the speciousness of his reasoning nor the threat to human dignity such reasoning represents. *(Continued on page 31)*

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C O M M E N T A R Y

(Continued from page 3)

There's a great deal to be said, too, for having good sex at home and then forgetting about it and getting on with the business of living. The concept of monogamy is considered old-fashioned, but if people are being promiscuous, it's not because they're being modern. Monogamy takes a lot of maturity, and most of us haven't got it. We're a little lost and having a hard time getting over childhood. Some of us have a difficult time relating to others on anything but a sexual level. Too many of us think with our balls.

On the other hand, there *are* mature people about who aren't into monogamy. It isn't their style. It doesn't suit them at all. It's positively *uncomfortable*. Fortunately, there are many alternatives open to them.

And the relationship they structure has many possibilities. They might choose to live together, but have an "arrangement" which would allow them both sexual freedom. Or they might choose to maintain separate apartments, but seeing each other and sharing experiences as often as it suits them.

One has to be realistic. A bit of good sex on the side can often revitalize a dying relationship. A threesome, an orgy, can do the same thing. A night at the tubs or in the back-room can be *exciting*.

The darkness, the dankness, the sleaziness merely add to the excitement. The dirty movies projected on the wall help get you off — if you need help getting off — and the disco music serves to package the final product.

It's crowded, and you can feel a stranger standing behind you, his body pressed hard against yours. You move into him, and as your buns respond to the urgency of his swelling cock, you undo your belt and zipper and drop your pants to the floor. Then he's inside you, fucking you, and someone is on his knees giving you some of the best head you've ever had. *I Wanna Fuck You Tonight* couldn't have been belted out at a more opportune moment. You're trembling all over. Your knees are nearly giving way. It's hot. You're sweaty. Somebody shoves a popper up your nose. You see fucking sunrise. Where are you? You shoot your wad down the guy's neck, and the stranger explodes his load inside your ass. Christ, it was good! And the audience *loved* it.

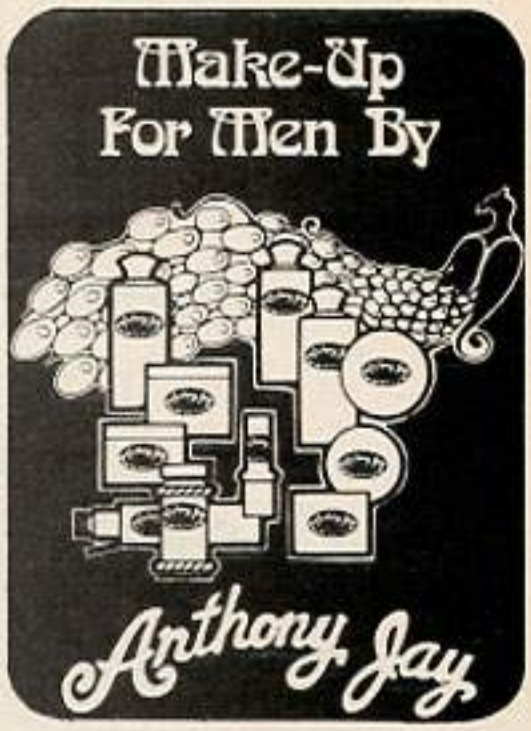
If you or your lover "strays" into this kind of scene, there's no need to lose your cool and blow the relationship. Loving someone means liking them enough to give them the freedom to be and do what they want. If he goes out to the bars on his own and doesn't come home until morning, it doesn't *necessarily* reflect on the relationship and his feelings for you. Maybe he'll like you better. So don't chew your fingernails and get drunk; instead, play bridge, dress up like Lillian Gish or Marlon Brando, pop corn, think of John Travolta, jerk off. Jealousy and possessiveness are far more destructive to a relationship than a casual trick — a fact we all know, yet invariably dismiss under pressure.

What is dangerous (whether one has a relationship or not) is spending *every* night at the baths or the back-rooms or the dirty bookstores or the toilets or the piers or the trucks — followed by the better part of a full day at the clinic. To be practical for a moment: How does one go to work in the morning? How, in fact, does one function (gay or straight) beyond sexuality? Behind sex?

It's a cliché, but the fact remains that the homosexual is often his own worst enemy. It's often the gay person who puts down gayness more than the heterosexual. One often hears gay people referring to other homosexuals as a B.B.T. (Big Butch Thing), or a B.B.Q. (Big Butch Queen) or a F.F.F. (Fire Island Flamingo Faggot). It's rather like saying that black people can call each other "niggers" provided white people don't do it. But in both cases, it indicates a lack of respect for oneself and other members of the community and suggests that the old guilt, shame and fear persist. In other words, if something frightens you, laugh at it. Why do you think straight men tell so many jokes about big tits, fat asses and mothers-in-law? Those are three very visible and uniquely feminine aspects of womanhood ... and it scares them shitless.

Frequently, the heterosexual community only sees the more superficial aspects of gayness. I refer, for example, to the practice of wearing keys and colored handkerchiefs right or left to indicate one's sexual tastes. They may find this difficult to understand, especially when we expect them to accept our credibility. On the other hand, it's an established fact that it pays to advertise. Who knows, maybe the straights will catch on, too? Could that paisley scarf round Jill's pretty neck mean that she's a rim *artiste?* And what about that gold watch chain adorning Jack's manly chest? Is it possible that underneath that smart Wall Street business suit, he's wearing a pair

(Continued on page 19)



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COMMENTARY

(Continued from page 17)

of No Nonsense Pantyhose and a Cross Your Heart bra?

Other aspects of "costume gayness" rob us of our individuality. I'm thinking of the workman's boots, the jeans (preferably torn), the bomber jacket covering a wind breaker, the hood of which remains outside the jacket, the short hair and the moustache. When you're a man, it's comfortable to be masculine, but *contrived* masculinity is as silly as *calculated* effeteness. Of course, the costume varies in the summer; then it's the tank top, the gym shorts and the baseball cap, but still the workman's boots and athletic socks. I know homosexuals who couldn't *possibly* be gay without a bicycle, and it must have a gear box with *at least* 16 speeds.

It is a fact that more and more bars are imposing "dress codes." You're simply not let in if you don't look like a cowboy or aren't in leather from head to foot. Then you check your clothes when you go in, and I don't mean your hat and coat; I mean your drawers. Modesty might compel you to retain one or two items such as a black leather hat or jacket or waistcoat. However, many homosexuals who are *not* into S&M, who are *not* into undinism, scatology and fist-fucking are *deliberately* getting into them almost as though they've become fashionable. It's rather like going out of one's way to become paraplegic.

A gay man related to me with a great sense of pride that he'd been to a fuckbar and had actually found the physical and spiritual strength to urinate on somebody. He then told what I thought was a sad story. A young man took off all his clothes and got into the bathtub and sat there for an hour waiting for somebody to piss on him; nobody would, and that must be the quintessence of rejection. Another young man, however, was luckier. He was also naked and lying on the bar; the bartender handed round a can of crisco, and most people took turns fist-fucking him.

It's a fact that sadomasochism, undinism and scatology and fist-fucking can be dangerous; they can also be degrading and indicate that you can't like yourself or others very much. But if you're feeling guilty about your sexuality, they can provide the *convenience* of having your punishment and humiliation built into your pleasure. If you're careful, sado-masochism doesn't have to be physically harmful, undinism and scatology need not be as disgusting and unhygenic as they sound, and even fist-fucking can be a pleasurable act of intimacy between two people. I won't go into techniques here; read the *Joy of Gay Sex* for specific tips.

The gay community, like the straight community, has its lunatic fringe, and one must be wary of loud-mouthed extremists who do the "cause" far more harm than good. Gay *can* be great, and black *can* be gorgeous, but they can both be bad and ugly. (As a matter of fact, gay is no longer considered good. That is passé. Gay is now *mood*. I know because I read it on a lavatory wall the other day.)

I have an advantage in reporting on the gay scene in the United States; having lived most of my life in Europe, I can view it with a fresh perspective. Frankly speaking, if I had to choose between New York, London and Paris, New York would win hands down every time. Gayness is more open here, accepted and acceptable; one doesn't feel discriminated against or persecuted; one sees nothing of the police harassment in New York to compare with that in London.

Homosexuality was legalized in England and Wales (but not Northern Ireland and Scotland) in 1967 between consenting adult males (over 21) in private, the definition of which has created many legal hassles. And since legalization, *police prosecutions against homosexuals have increased by 150%*.

That is police harassment. One must also handle daily public harassment, strangers walking up to you in the street and making insulting comments. Quentin Crisp, the author of that remarkable BBC documentary, *The Naked Civil Servant*, once told me how he had been standing in a bus queue in Victoria Street, and an impeccably dressed middle-aged man walked up to him and spat in his face. One must also handle public violence; it's called "queer bashing," and not so long ago, 13 English school children kicked a gay man to death who was innocently walking his dog on Wimbledon Common.

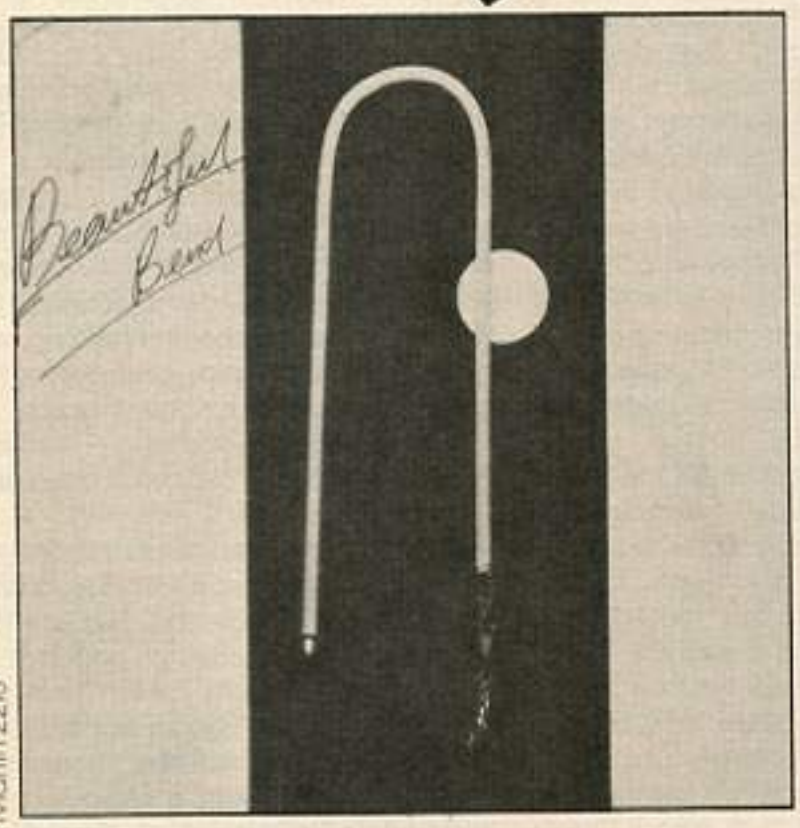
Gay liberation in America varies enormously from place to place. So-called "Middle Americans" may not be as permissive as New Yorkers, and Police Departments, even in New York, may not be as liberal. What does one do if one is homosexual and living in Honeoye Falls, New York? Streak down Main Street on Lilac Sunday? Move? The climate of opinion in major American cities (where, coincidentally, there is generally a sense of community among gays due to their sheer presence and number) was much worse than it now is. American homosexuals have a sense of gay awareness and pride which European homosexuals lack. Coming out of the closet is not enough because you can come out of the closet and still be a mess.

Totally uninhibited sexual encounters, while they are available and tolerated, and while they offer a post-liberation ecstacy, may ultimately be self-destructive. One is constantly having to find new kicks and eventually one runs out of them. It is becoming essential to get some values and standards in gay life — beyond sex — and to acquire a sense of judgment and propriety and tact. Both straights and gays, while rightly questioning the "old morality," must develop a "new morality" for themselves and a new sense of responsibility toward others. Without a New Morality, there is only Anarchy.

I was told shortly after I arrived in America that romance was going to be the next big sexual kick in New York. Let's think about romance in a specifically gay context. Is it going to the movies and holding someone's hand instead of his cock, and getting flowers for your birthday instead of a blowjob? Or is it going to the movies and holding someone's hand *and* cock, and getting flowers *and* a blowjob for your birthday. Gay romance goes beyond sex — it often *follows* sex — and it concerns one's *affectional* preferences.

It's difficult, of course, to predict what the future holds, but it's unlikely that the fist-fucking will soon end. Nor are S&M, undinism and scatology, sodomy and other aspects of sex (which heterosexuals enjoy as well) going out of fashion. Heterosexuals, of course, have an advantage in not being a minority group, and hopefully, as gay pride becomes an integral part of our psyches and not just a slogan, and gay liberation becomes a reality and not just a movement, we'll feel sufficiently self-confident and at home in society to relax and be people as opposed to homosexuals. There will always be gay bars and gay discos and exclusively gay activities, but with any luck, we'll be able to lose our self-consciousness and shed our ghetto mentality. If a particular sexual practice is harmful to you physically and/or psychologically, you should be the first person to know it and do something about it. And when it comes to choosing a lifestyle and a morality for yourself, you're the only one who can do it. That's one of the bonuses of being gay; life has so many more possibilities and alternatives. ■

DISCO'S DYNAMIC DUO



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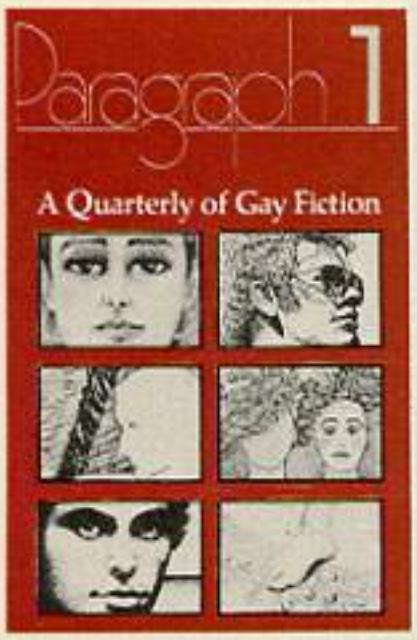
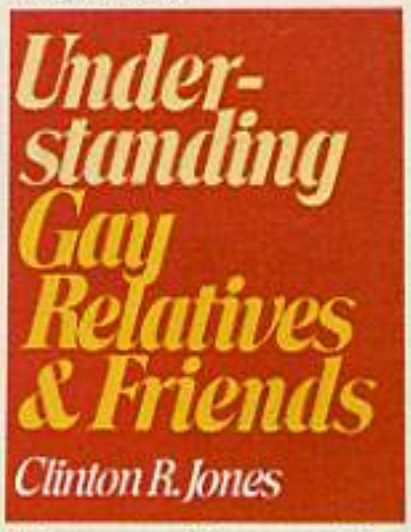


Quarter Masters

Paragraph, A Quarterly of Gay Fiction publishes "innovative, experimental and erotic" prose as well as foreign works in English translation. The modestly produced and priced volume (one-year subscription, or four issues — $10, sample issue — $3) is a project of The Antares Foundation which was established in 1976 as a charitable, literary and educational trust fund. Short stories about gay men and women, each with a black and white illustration, demonstrate the diversity of the gay lifestyle in a format that is direct and refreshing. *Paragraph/ The Antares Foundation, Box 14051, San Francisco, Ca. 94114.*

My Relative, The Gay Person

Clinton R. Jones, canon of Christ Church Cathedral in Hartford, Conn. and the author of two previous books in the field of sexual counseling, simplifies the problems of gay people confronting family and friends with their homosexuality in his new guidebook, *Understanding Gay Relatives and Friends.* One of the purposes of the book, states the author, is "to reduce prejudice, misinformation and lack of understanding as rapidly as possible," in an effort to provide social acceptance for those who comprise our sexual minorities. Published by *The Seabury Press, 815 Second Ave., New York 10017; $3.95.*



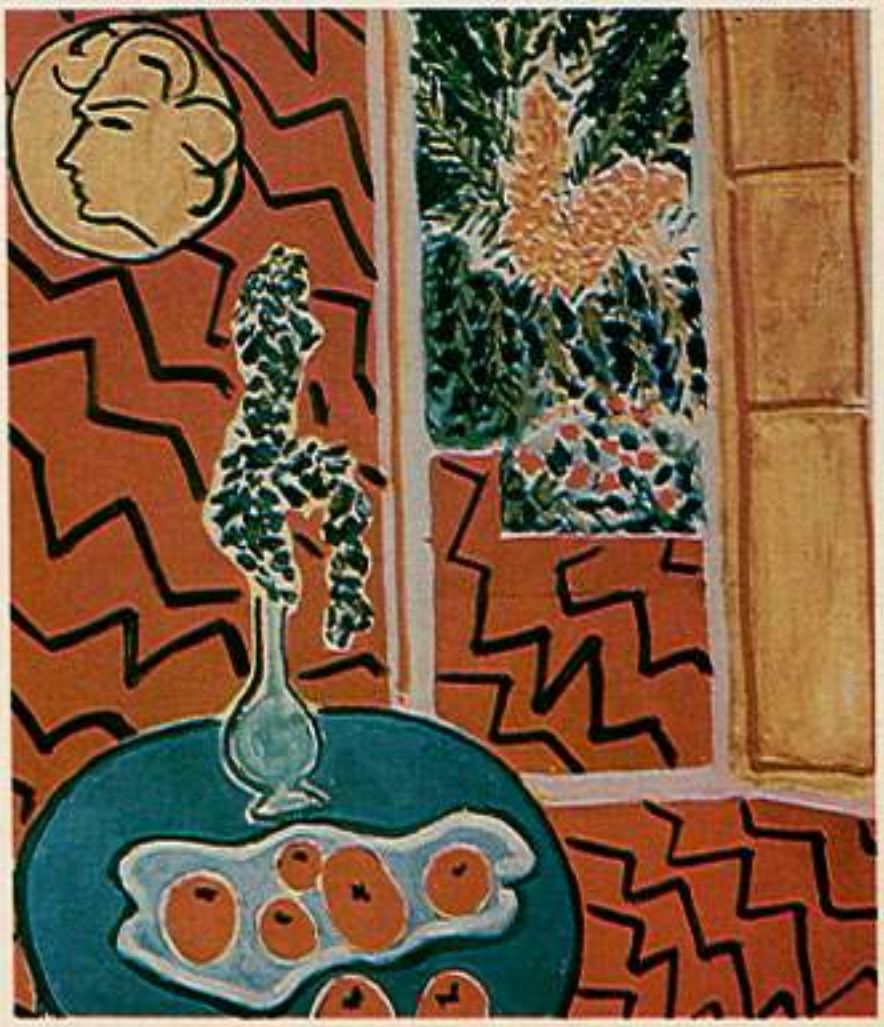
Whatever Happened to Frances Farmer?

Frances Farmer — leading lady to Bing Crosby, Cary Grant and Tyrone Power on film, triumphant star of the legendary Group Theatre stage production of *Golden Boy* in 1937 — is the subject of William Arnold's Gothic-but-true tale of the Hollywood beauty who unsuccessfully fought insanity and a hostile political machine. As the Farmer Cinderella story begins to blacken (a minor traffic violation at the height of her career led to years of involuntary commitment in an asylum), Arnold lets loose his expose of the psychosurgery movement in America, which is the deeper subject of the Frances Farmer "biography," *Shadowland.* "The bitter legacy of her story," he writes,

"is not that such a fate could strike a public figure protected by the privileges of celebrity, but that it can happen to anyone." The producer of *The Exorcist* has bought film rights to *Shadowland,* which is published by *McGraw-Hill; $9.95.*

Matisse at MOMA

"I do not literally paint that table," Matisse declared in 1912, "but the emotion it produces on me." This fall, the Museum of Modern Art will inaugurate its 50th anniversary year with an exhibition of approximately 140 Matisse paintings, drawings, prints, books and cut-outs in which the emotive qualities of the master's work — particularly from the years when he was considered to be at his zenith — will be in full evidence. The exhibition will include all Matisse holdings in the Museum collection (said to be the greatest in the Western Hemisphere) and will run from October 27 through January 5, 1979. *The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 St., New York 10019.*



NOTES ON WHAT'S HOT, WHO'S HOT & OTHER ASSORTED MEMORABILIA by Bruce Fitzgerald

BRIEFS

Nine Men in Search of Survival

Called a gay *Chorus Line* because of the personal nature of the revelations made by its nine male characters, *Crimes Against Nature* is a project of the Gay Men's Theater Collective that came to New York via San Francisco, where it played for well over a year. Subtitled "a play about survival," *Crimes Against Nature* received the Bay Area Theater Critics Circle Award during its California run — a legacy the company hopes to perpetuate in The Big Apple. *CAN* opened in June at the *Actor's Playhouse, Seventh Avenue South at Sheridan Square, New York.*

Sparkling Burgundy

Milanese architect Gae Aulenti designed this furniture collection for Knoll International; tables, chairs, settees and sofas all have an aluminum extrusion frame with either "amaranto" (shown) or black fused finish. Aulenti has softened the Deco influence by his consistent use of curved edges and joints, updated it with shimmering surfaces that wear as well as they look. Table, about $1167; lounge chair, about $894; settee, about $1348; sofa, about $1751. Available through architects or designers, or contact *Knoll International, 745 Fifth Ave., New York 10022.*

Broadway's Best Musical

The life and times and music of jazz pianist and composer Fats Waller is the seriocomic substance of *Ain't Misbehavin'*, Broadway's 1978 Tony Award winner for Best Musical. Designed as an authentic interpretation of Waller's songs (there are almost 30 of them in the production) and lifestyle, *Ain't Misbehavin'* has a cast of six (mostly in their early '20s), a superb '40s wardrobe styled by Randy Barcelo, and a singular vitality undeterred by the fact that the show is, essentially, a tribute. "The only thing I can compare it to," said director Richard Maltby Jr., "is Restoration comedy." Apparently, the comparison ain't bad. At the *Longacre Theatre, 48th St. west of Broadway; (212) 246-5639.*

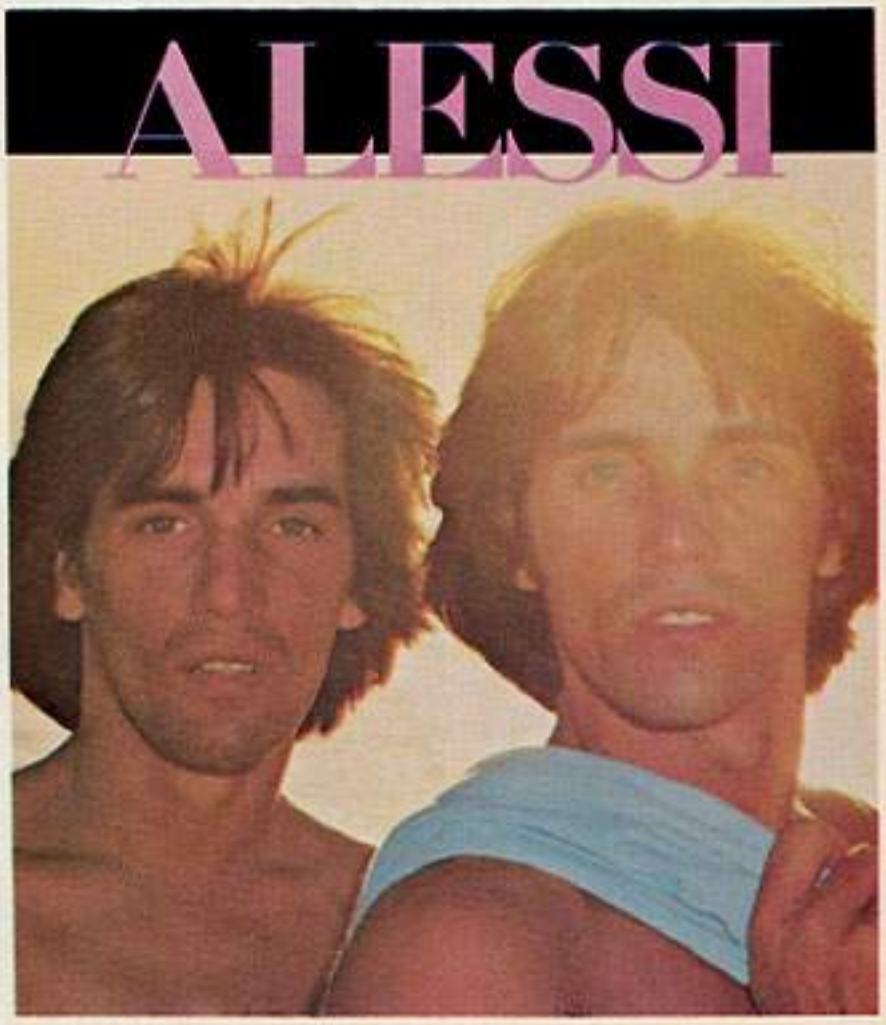
Fantasy Furniture

Like the best magic, Wendell Castle's sculptural furniture uses the effects of illusion to urge the viewer into an acceptance of the logic peculiar to an act or an object of astonishing virtuosity. Thus, a Stetson hat and tasseled scarf — perfectly rendered in wood — sit casually on one

side of a laminated wood desk, becoming an all-in-one sculptural image as well as a functional, meticulously crafted domestic object. Castle's work has been featured in publications as diverse as *House Beautiful, Art in America, Newsweek, Vogue* and *Time*, and a new group of the carved replicas was the subject of a recent New York exhibition. Priced in the $4200-11,000 range, this latest "trompe l'oeil" sculpture may be seen and purchased through the *Carl Solway Gallery, 139 Spring St., New York 10012; (212) 925-1200.*

The "Screw" Seal of Approval

When a new synthetic stimulant called *Snocane* crossed paths with the sex review called *Screw*, the result was a "Seal of Approval" editorial in the publication that calls itself "The World's Greatest Newspaper." "Today," according to the *Screw* endorsement, "there's *Snocane*, a coke substitute that dispenses with the vacuous mimicry of the real thing, and gets down to cases. Snort it up your nose and within a half-hour, you're high." To objectively test the effects of *Snocane*, they took one unsuspecting *Screw* editor and told him that they had a new kind of illicit coke. "The *Screw* editor," says the editorial, "taking us at our word, snuffed a pile of the white powder up his nose and reported back in a half-hour that he was indeed pleasantly high. In fact, he liked the product so much that four hours later he stepped in for a recharge ... Why talk about drugs in this column? Well, to put it simply, sex is good, but sex when you're high is better, or at least that's what they tell us." Thanks, *Screw*, for telling us about sex and *Snocane*. For a two-gram bottle of the favored white powder, send $10 to *Snocane, 171 N.E. 166 St., North Miami, Fla. 33162.*



The Brothers Alessi

The beauty part of *Alessi* (brothers Billy and Bobby) doesn't stop with their looks. It extends to the elegant harmonies and melodies that have made the duo such a hot concert act (even in Japan) and that other vocalists (Richie Havens, Olivia Newton-John) have recorded on albums of their own. The antithesis of punk rockers, the Alessi Brothers put forth a discreet brand of rock that can be found on *Alessi* (their first album), *All For A Reason* (their second) and a third album to be released this month on the A&M label.

They say that America is no longer the land of opportunity.

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INTERVIEW WITH JAMES PURDY

BY JERE REAL

A half-crazed young boy — in a state of delayed shock from injury in an auto-train accident that killed his father and brother — is pursued by another young man, a friend of his, to a cemetery. There, the boy, Gareth Vaisey, is stripped and forcibly raped by his acquaintance whom the West Virginia locals call by the suggestive and derogatory epithet, "The Renderer." Having sexually assaulted the boy, "The Renderer" then beats him with a whip as the boy lies atop a tombstone.

In the days that follow this climactic scene in the new novel, *Narrow Rooms*, by James Purdy, the boy Gareth makes a startling recovery; he emerges suddenly, almost miraculously, from the near-dead state in which he has been since his accident.

That incident, only one in a steadily increasing crescendo of sex-related violence, is typical of Purdy's new work; and it demonstrates clearly why James Purdy, now in his early fifties, has remained one of America's more controversial and provocative writers of serious fiction in the past two decades.

Recently, Purdy sat one wintry afternoon in a small restaurant on Greenwich Avenue in New York, a favorite haunt of his, and discussed his latest novel and a host of other, more far-ranging topics.

Sipping a glass of white wine, Purdy spoke quietly, in a manner that almost deceptively disarms a listener, for what he says often is quite disturbing. Over the course of two such afternoon meetings, he talked about his work, his tragic vision of our flawed human nature, and his view of homosexuality which has, as he puts it, "captured the imagination of the public today." He also talked about the search for one's identity — and the concurrent failure of individuals to know their true selves — a fact he sees as having terrible consequences. Indeed, Purdy suggests that a society that refuses to look inward seriously — to really know itself — may face violent tragedy.

When asked about the violent

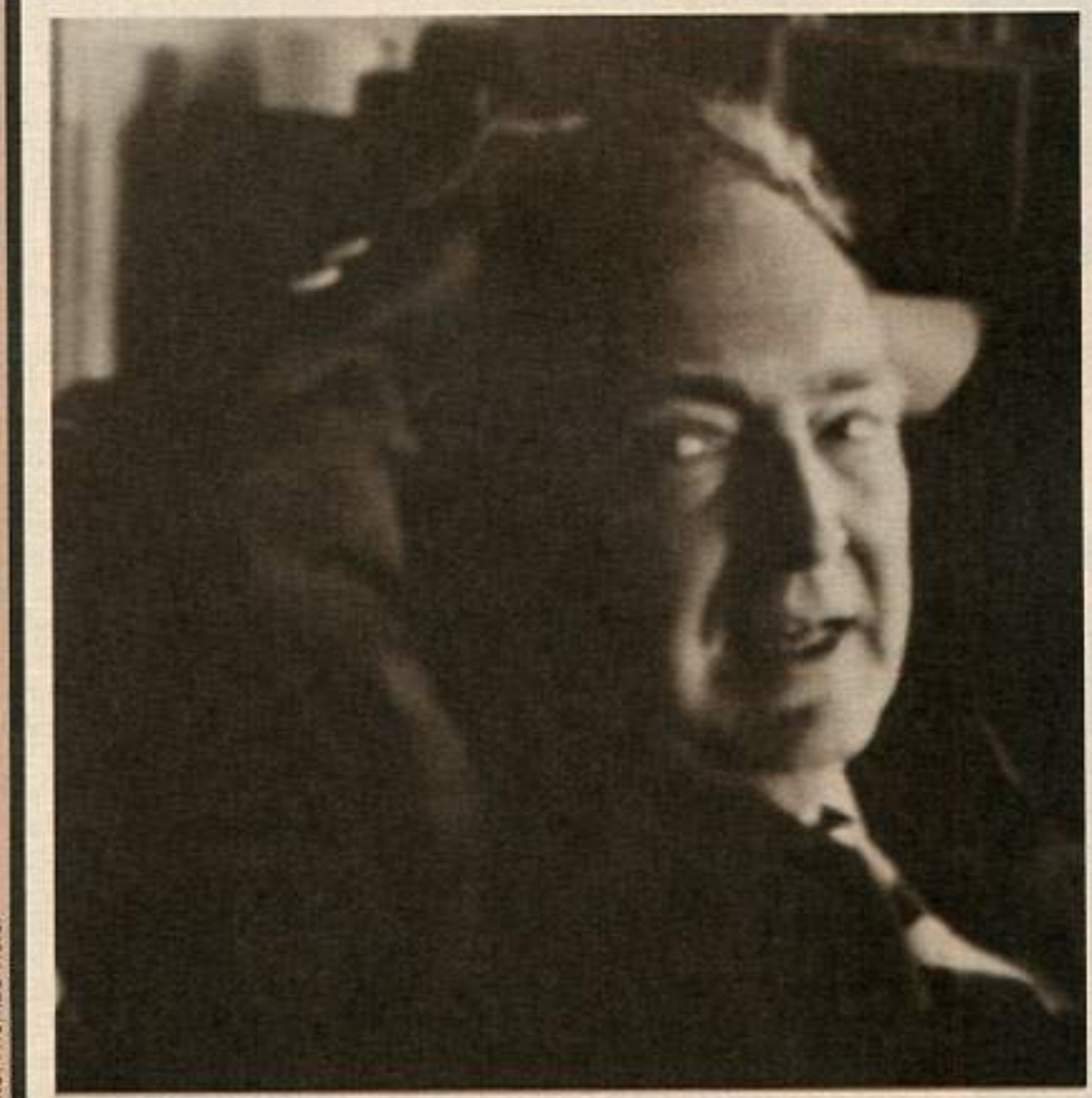

Photo: Thomas Victor

James Purdy, now in his early fifties, has remained one of America's more controversial and provocative writers of serious fiction in the past two decades. Here, he talks about his new novel, *Narrow Rooms*, and his view of homosexuality which has, as he puts it, "captured the imagination of the public."

(Continued from page 25)

graveyard scene in his new book, Purdy recalled for me an earlier scene in the novel, one where the young shock victim, Gareth Vaisey, is forcibly given enemas by his mother and a hired helper. "You see," Purdy said softly, "that's the artificial rape, and then there's the real rape. Well, you see, what Gareth *really* wants is the real thing ... it's what he needs. And when it finally happens, he's suddenly rejuvenated. It's what he's been needing all along."

There are many literary observers who well might argue that Purdy's fiction works on the minds of his readers in much the same shocking, but rejuvenative fashion.

Purdy, of course, has been sounding such unusual themes in his fiction for years, certainly ever since his literary career was initiated two decades ago by friends who first privately published his work in this country. In England, the late poet Dame Edith Sitwell was one of his first literary advocates, and she aided in getting Purdy's work published in England even before it was published in the United States. His early work gained him a small following, particularly his short stories and his novella, *63: Dream Palace*, in which two young boys from Appalachia are lost in the corruption and decadence of modern city life.

His allegorical novel, *Malcolm*, followed in 1959. In that symbolic work, a beautiful young man was found seated on a hotel bench by a Mr. Cox. Cox then proceeded to give Malcolm the addresses of all sorts of people who lead the boy through virtually every conceivable experience. The novel ended with Malcolm dying, after a few short years, of alcoholism and sexual hyperaesthesia. (That novel was adapted into play form in 1966 by Edward Albee, an admirer of Purdy's work, but the New York production was not successful.)

Purdy's literary audience grew with the publication of his novels, *The Nephew* (1960) and *Cabot Wright Begins* (1964). *The Nephew* explored small town life in the American Midwest. There, the survivors of a young soldier killed in the Korean War attempted to learn more about their nephew in death than they had known in life. That attempt led the grieved aunt to discover aspects of the boy's character she had never known, including the nephew's close association and friendship with two of the town's homosexuals. The book underscored Purdy's oft-stated view of American family life as "cannibalistic," of families' "devouring" their young by refusing to let them break away and live their own lives.

Cabot Wright Begins, similarly, was an attack, albeit satirical, on an American culture Purdy sees as totally materialistic ("There are no common people any more," he told me, "we are simply a nation of consumers.") Ours is a culture which is completely competitive, one where everyone is "terrified of love, sexual and otherwise." Weird and funny all at once, *Cabot Wright Begins* related the commercial exploitation of a Wall Street rapist who had managed to seduce 366 women. The novel was sold to motion pictures, but the film version was never made.

In 1967, Purdy turned to the more closeted side of homosexual life with *Eustace Chisholm and the Works*. In that book he dealt with Daniel Haws, a man obsessively in love with the strikingly handsome Eustace Chisholm, but a man also repressed in his love because of his own inability to come to terms with his inner desires. Two pervading themes of Purdy merged in that book: the search for self-identity and the inevitable failure of most human beings to ever really know themselves.

The first volume of his projected trilogy of Midwestern life appeared in 1970. *Jeremy's Version* won high critical praise for Purdy that year, but the second volume, *The House of the Solitary Maggot* (1974) received almost no notice from reviewers. Purdy is still at work on the trilogy, collectively entitled *Sleepers in Moon-Crowned Valleys*, "and the third volume," he says, "will be called *Mourners Below*." Both *Jeremy's Version* and *The House of the Solitary Maggot* have homosexual love affairs as key elements in their complex plots.

Perhaps his most curious work is the 1972 *I Am Elijah Thrush*, a near-surrealistic odyssey among some of New York City's stranger citizens. The novel concerned an aged male dancer (once known as "the most beautiful man in the world") who had studied with Isadora Duncan and who was fascinated by a mysterious blond, angelic child known as the Bird of Heaven. Bird of Heaven, incidentally, was a mute who communicated with the old man by making peculiar kissing sounds.

In his most recent works, Purdy has turned from metropolitan settings. In his 1976 novel, *In A Shallow Grave*, he unfolded a terrifying tale of a Vietnam veteran who has lost his face (that most personal form of identity) in a wartime injury. Set in Virginia, the book traced the veteran's attempt to re-build his existence through relationships with a young Negro named Quintus and with a strange mythic visitor, a beautiful young man with no front teeth named Daventry.

His new work, *Narrow Rooms*, has just been published (Arbor House) and it is an almost Gothic tale of horror, dealing as it does with the repressed sexuality of four West Virginia boys who can not cope with

their feelings for one another. It is a work partially derived from fact, Purdy explains.

"I grew up in rural Ohio which is quite near West Virginia, and I've lived in small towns in West Virginia. I once heard a similar story to the violent one I relate in *Narrow Rooms*."

I was once driving with Truman Capote in Virginia, I explained to Purdy, and we passed a roadside marker that said "West Virginia, so many miles," and Capote remarked to me that he had interviewed hundreds of killers and a remarkable number of them had come from West Virginia. He looked at me and said: "It must be a terrible place."

Purdy reflected on the observation a second or two and continued: "Well, these young men I heard about had a gang — a sexual gang — and all were shot to death because of the situation."

"You see, I'm always running into these hillbilly types in New York, and they tell me things like this too." There is a pause. "You see, you meet everyone in New York sooner or later."

Because of its complex and violent plot, *Narrow Rooms* is filled with arresting images and scenes. The novel relates the experiences of a young ex-convict who returns from prison to his West Virginia home. The ex-convict, Sid de Lakes, then must deal with his changed relationship with his younger brother, Vance, as well as with a young shock victim, Gareth Vaisey, whom he is hired to care for. As the novel progresses in the present, past events are recalled:Sid served time in prison for killing another young man, Brian McFee, with whom he'd had an affair. Brian originally had been sent to Sid by Roy Sturtevant, "The Renderer," who has himself loved Sid since their high school days.

At one point in the complex story, Sid, caring for the patient Gareth, caresses the boy and sucks on his toes which, as Purdy writes it, "had the odor about them like preserved cherries." Asked about that scene, Purdy laughed: "You know, I don't know where I got that ... but you know, your toes do tend to smell sweetish at times."

Throughout the new novel, an older citizen of the region, Doc Ulric observes the passions of the four boys. At one point, he tells another character: "I don't think of people as queer or straight. Not when you're as old as I. And I don't think God does either."

Did Purdy intend that as a topical reference to such recent national events as the anti-gay initiatives of Anita Bryant and others in Florida and elsewhere?

Purdy considers the question.

"No. You know, I wrote that before I ever heard of her and all that business last year. But isn't it funny ... how it applies."

The question about Anita Bryant leads Purdy to consider his novel from a different perspective. "Certainly, that passage is applicable to her ... to such a woman ... to such a godless woman.

"Isn't it funny how often religion makes people godless and irreligious?" He launches into a story of a minister's wife he knew of years ago in West Virginia.

"There was this Methodist minister's wife, a real shrew, and it was during pretty hard times, and there were all these people out of work on the roads. And this young fellow came to the house of this Methodist minister's wife and he asked her for something to eat and drink. And this minister's wife — very religious — said she would feed him 'only provided you tell me that you have taken Jesus Christ as your personal saviour'...and the young man thought a second and said, 'Come to think of it, I don't think I'm that hungry.'

"You know, God's kingdom is for everybody. It's not reserved for pious heterosexual hypocrites. After all, Jesus was really one of the first social radicals."

"I think that's like Anita Bryant. You know, God's kingdom, or Jesus' kingdom is for everybody. It's not reserved for pious heterosexual hypocrites. After all, Jesus was really one of the first social radicals. He didn't appeal to the 'respectable' people of his time ... he ministered largely to outcasts.

"You see, Anita Bryant herself really isn't an important person, except in that she's an evil and dangerous woman."

In *Narrow Rooms,* Doc Ulric discusses at another point the relationships developing between the four young men, and he recalls an earlier love affair in that region — one between a young boy and a village girl, Ruthanna Elder — which ended violently and tragically. The doctor says: "In my day it was the story of Jesse and Ruthanna Elder ... Now it's these young men who have such strong passions. We've been brought up to date."

Is that comment Purdy's view of homosexual love in present-day life?

"An old doctor really *did* tell me that," Purdy answers. "But I think that every group tends to have its day. And we're living in the day when homosexuality has captured the imagination of the public."

In an interview several days ago, Purdy had remarked he thought America was obsessed with homosexuality.

INTERVIEWER: When I read that at the time, I took you to be saying that the country was "obsessed" in a negative way on the subject. Do you see that situation as changed ... as more positive now?

PURDY: Well, I think that on the surface there may be more tolerance of homosexuality...the window dressing has changed. But I don't know how deep it goes. It's like the Blacks. I think there's just as much prejudice as ever about Blacks ... but not on the surface. The main thing about the gay thing is that it's in the papers now where it used to be hidden ... hidden away ... and not talked about at all.

Purdy is not sympathetic to those who take simplistic views of human relationships, either heterosexual or homosexual.

"Of course, those who say heterosexuality is somehow better are all wrong; of course that isn't so. D.H. Lawrence started all that bosh — if you put it in a hole, that somehow solves everything. It doesn't solve anything. There ARE no solutions: that's the human condition.

"I've had some trouble," Purdy went on, "with some of the gay press too. Some of them say I'm not 'gay enough' in my writing. By that, they mean I don't always say 'gay is best' and always have happy endings. *Narrow Rooms* may be treated as a gay novel — certainly I deal with the subject head on in it — but it ends tragically. But that's because that's the way I see the human condition."

Purdy sees men as unwilling to accept their own natures, and that, he believes, is our essential tragedy. As a theme, it looms large in his new work.

"The only thing E.M. Forster ever said that I liked, and he's not a writer I like — and he said it in *Maurice,* which isn't a book I like — and he said: 'The English people have never been able to accept human nature.' And it is true of the Americans too, I think. They expect everybody to follow a pattern ... educationally, occupationally, sexually. But that's just not the way humans are. I think we all are born the way we are and you just can't expect everyone to follow a pattern.

"I always liked what Ernest Renan said about Christianity in his book, *The Life of Jesus.* He said Christianity was a subtle poison corrupting all the institutions of the Western world. What he meant, of course, was that Christianity tried to redefine human nature."

Purdy links this acceptance of our

(Continued on page 28)

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(Continued from page 77)

natures-as-they-are to events in *Narrow Rooms*: "You see, in the new book, the ex-convict Sid really loves the boy called The Renderer, but because that boy is stained with the marks of a profession that is both dangerous and despicable (that of melting down the carcasses of dead animals), Sid can't return the love until it is too late." Sid's realizaton of his love, Purdy points out, comes only after tragic violence has occurred between the two young men.

"In us," he continues, "we often reject the real part of ourselves. We too often cannot love it, and we only value that part, that tinsel part of ourselves, that is given to us by society.

"To me, some of the professional gays are guilty of the same point of view as the straight people. They have this petty bourgeois view of life. They see being 'gay' as the solution. They say — some of them, not all — that gay is better, that to be gay solves everything.

"However, I believe life is tragic. It's my view that nothing ever solves anything. Oh yes, life is full of many joys ... but it's essentially tragic because man is imperfect. He can't find solutions by his very nature."

Purdy, too, is keenly aware that many readers of fiction are more interested in entertainment-type writing than in serious fiction, even when it comes to books dealing with homosexuality.

"Of course, a lot of readers want the more popular kinds of gay novels. That book ... the Long Distance Runner, or whatever it was called ..."

"The Front Runner?"

"Yes, that one. It's not realistic at all. It's not true. But everybody went out and bought it and read it."

Many of Purdy's works have been severely criticized for their excursions into bloody violence. In his 1967 novel, *Eustace Chisholm and the Works*, Daniel Haws, the main character, and an Army Captain Stadger met regularly during off-duty hours to fight one another until their final confrontation when Stadger tied Daniel to a tree, beat him, and finally castrated and disemboweled him. More recently, his rarely reviewed *House of the Solitary Maggot* also was marked by the violence of several brothers against one another. In *I Am Elijah Thrush*, the "retired liberal-radical" Ted Maufritz regularly tapped an artery and drank the blood of the Negro Albert Peggs.

Purdy explains how in both those books and in his new work violence and passion are linked to one another. But it is a mixture misunderstood by some of his critics.

"Love is such a violent passion," he explains. Referring to *Narrow Rooms*, he recalls the character of The Renderer. "Well," Purdy says, "love renders people too.

"And passion is violence, of course. But without passion, we're not human. It was Rousseau ... I think it was Rousseau ... it might have been Balzac, who said, 'I think all passions are good when we master them.'"

So, in spite of his fiction showing passion as leading to violence on many occasions, Purdy does not see violence as an integral part of the intense love relationships he portrays.

"My point is," he affirms quietly, "that if we don't face ourselves, we face violence. If we really don't know ourselves, then our lives may end in such violence."

In *Narrow Rooms*, Gareth accuses the ex-convict Sid de Lakes of torturing his young admirer, Roy Sturtevant (The Renderer). "...You've been torturing him all your life. As the hero of the football team, the diver and swimmer, the pure American stock back to the Revolution and before, looking down on the Renderer's son like he was some nigger or drunk Indian ..."

Is that Purdy's comment on a basic flaw in American males, this inability to recognize — or accept — love?

"Well, Sid is like Daniel Haws of *Eustace Chisholm* ... he distrusts his basic nature. And yes, I think that it's in everybody.

"In that sense, the new book ... of course it may have a topical application to society ... it's a kind of allegory, I guess. But that's something I never think of when I'm writing. Somehow, in my books, I never actually say to myself: I'm going to write an allegory of this or that ... but I see these things too, later. Yes, I think it's true. The American male, and the American female too, is afraid of his basic nature. I think that is the universal human tragedy. We never become what we could be."

In *Narrow Rooms*, a young boy, Brian McFee (shot to death later in the book), states his view of heaven to Sid (who is his lover at that point):

"My idea of heaven is to be hunting with you in some beautiful park with mountains like here at home but where we don't need guns or prey but we will just walk together arm in arm in this good world and be by ourselves always together forever and a day."

I suggested to Purdy that the passage sounded almost like a prayer.

"Well, no. It's just the way that boys like that talk, when they are really talking about what they feel."

Is it Purdy's view of what we really could become?

Across the table, James Purdy doesn't answer. He toys with the silverware on the table. Then he looks up and smiles. ■

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102 STAR WARRIORS
Captain Edward Crofton, handsome blonde officer of Her Majesty's forces, becomes twisted and distorted by the death of his young lover. Once he gains control over a source of power, he begins to play a bizarre game of sexual power politics.

103 HITCH HIKE
Turning eighteen and graduating from high school are true milestones in a young man's life. For Tony, it's just not enough. Knowing that his New England living was sheltered, he starts out on a hitch hiking adventure across the country.

104 CLOSET ENCOUNTERS
What starts out as a forced getaway at knife point, turns into a love affair when Chuck decides to help Tod out of his messed-up life. As the pair travels cross-country, the world of men opens up to them both, as never before.

105 SEMPER FIDELIS
The Vietnamese War has affected many lives. For Marines Farrell and Newton, the war provides the setting for a realization of the needs within. Separated in combat, the two are once again brought together.

106 INCESTUOUS LUST
When two sons are fortunate enough to have a father who knows the score, it can make for a very open relationship. Pete and Greg have such a dad and their relationship is just beginning to blossom.

107 THE YEARNING POINT
Kevin Knight never considered that he may be a homosexual until he was confronted with teaching a lesson to a junior college classmate who was a known homosexual. Instead of teaching him the lesson, he ends up giving in to his desires.

108 COMING WEEKEND
With the end of summer, comes a desire for one last wild fling before fall. Al's got the money and the place for it and he invites only the best studs he knows for four days of non-stop sex.

109 BEACH BALL
Chuck is a stereotyped, blonde and beautiful lifeguard whose straight outlook on life takes a turn as he meets up with some interesting summer acquaintances. The situation seems like it will erupt but just then the right catalyst comes along.

110 SLAVE FIGHT
Tony loves porn. He's the first to get to the new gay flicks, but he still hasn't admitted his own homosexuality ... that is until now. Once he does, there's no holding him back.

111 NEPTUNE LETTERS
As the revolution is commencing, Jim and Mario find that they will be separated indefinitely until the rebels are taken in hand. As Mario's friend, Jim attempts to smuggle money from the country. What is Mario to do? Had he sent his lover to his death?

112 RAVISHED ROBBY
Robby is innocent and naive when he runs away from home at eighteen to seek his uncertain future in New York City. He meets Mark, who introduces him to a life style for which he is ill prepared, and finds himself learning quickly about life as a runaway.

10001 THE STAR'S LOVERS
The stranger reached out and grabbed Phil closer. He kissed him passionately on his stomach and then between his thighs, moaning with pleasure. Phil thought of the money he needed for the rent as he plunged his throbbing meat between the moist lips of the humpy stranger.

10002 HUSTLIN' LIKE DAD
"I got us a three-way" Bob announced to his son. "Great," said Tony. He recalled that he and his father had not made it together since their first time. After a day of hustling they were generally too tired to care about sex one way or another. Now it was different. Looking at Tony, Bob felt himself growing excited in spite of himself. He saw some movement under the towel covering Tony's crotch. He smiled then whipped the towel away. "Wow," he said, when he saw what Tony was concealing.

10003 COACH BROWN'S BOYS
Coach Brown had a perfect deal. As the school's track coach, he could lounge around the locker and watch all the hunky young studs walking around naked. The sight of all those bare buns kept the coach in a state of complete and permanent excitement. Occasionally, a sweet, plump 18-year-old would be turned on by the coach. Like the boy who turned up his bottom to Coach Brown and pleaded, "Do me, coach, — DO ME."

10004 HIS COCKSURE COUSIN
It was the hottest event of the year the night Steve brought his younger cousin Freddie to a leather party. The boy and his nine-inch rod were the hit of the evening — especially when he released it from his sweaty leather shorts and forced Freddie to take on the roughest stud in town. But Freddie had the young stud whimpering on his knees in no time.

10005 WHIPPING CREAM
The driver was a real hunk. Looking at him, Steve felt his crotch twitch. "What's on yer mind?" the driver asked. Steve sized up the man and decided he was alright. "Fun," he said. He looked at the driver's crotch. The bulge began to swell. "Let's get it on, man," he said. "My place or yours?" Except for Steve's car and the truck, the rest area was deserted. Moments later, they climbed into the sleeper compartment of the truck. Steve leaned down and gently kissed the trucker's navel. He ran his mouth down over the cotton briefs and he felt the bulge quiver and stiffen. With a little groan, the trucker slipped his hand around Steve's neck.

10006 TRUCKIN' CRAZY
Eighteen-year-old Larry crouched down between Rod's coffee-colored thighs. He stared at the shaft that rose in the air. The skin on it was satiny smooth and shiny, as soft and tender to the touch as silk. And in the soft light of the bedroom it was ebony. He leaned closer and began to taste the beauty of the Black Dude.

10007 THE FIST-FITS
Randy, Uncle Jeff, and Tony the houseboy formed a bizarre triangle of gay love and painful sex games. When Randy and Tony first met, Randy didn't know the meaning of the word "gay." But Tony knew. And he also knew why his manhood throbbed and lengthened at the sight of the other boy's body. They became lovers. Randy's uncle Jeff was another kind of stud. Leather garb, bondage and whipping were his specialties. Tony had known the taste of the whip. When Randy, trembling, went into the basement dungeon at his uncle's command, he knew that his tight-muscled buns would know the sting of his uncle's lash. And he went eagerly, feeling a keen excitement he had never felt before.

10008 BLACK TOWER
"Please, no more," Erik begged, as he vainly tried to struggle from the coarse rope which bound his bleeding wrists behind his trembling back. "Shut up and get down on all fours, like a dog." Kirk laughed, as he greased all of his black-haired, muscular, tattoed arm with the cooking oil. "Get down in front of him," Kirk ordered Johnny. As Erik felt the force of Kirk's fist as it ripped into his hole, he tried to scream. But his cries were muffled as all eight inches of Johnny's manhood were shoved down his throat.

10009 STRANGE BEDFELLOWS
Jack, aching to taste life, befriends the all-American football jock only to be treated like dirt once the sex has ended. The one-sided relationship ends, but for Jack his life is just beginning.

10010 POSITION OF POWER
Leading a dual life is not uncommon for the gay male, but for Randy Pope it's doubly dangerous. Wielding power in government proves to be very complicated when blackmail enters the picture.

10011 MEN AT SEA
Men at sea have only other men to turn to for solace from loneliness, for affection, for companionship and understanding. How natural that a certain type of man should choose such a lifestyle in preference to the more traditional existence of pretense and hiding.

10012 SEMI ROUGH
Two cops are spending a well-deserved vacation in a remote mountain cabin together, but the fun is rudely interrupted when the Chief sends a chopper after them to work on an important drug syndicate case.

10013 I AM CURIOUS (GAY)
Chad and Mark have been lovers for over five years and have been faithful the whole time. But this is about to change for both of them when the new neighbors turn out to be three of the hottest and horniest studs right out of Sweden.

10014 PORNO BOYS
Tony and Bob are lovers and also dancers at the Cygnet Theatre. The relationship is great except for an argument that reoccurs — always over money. The two are determined to earn more money and they finally get their chance.

10015 MEN OF THE BLUEGRASS
Haunted by the death of his lover, Brett looks for some purpose and meaning in his life. Perhaps he's found it in fighting a powerful rancher who has abused a young farmboy.

10016 CONNECTED BY MISTAKE
A simple telephone call changes Chris Sanderson's whole life. He was connected with Kyle Hewitt by mistake, but the call twisted him into a new shape, a freshly alive being.

10017 APOSTLE OF SIN
Anyone seeing Jared Martin soaping his massively muscled body would have easily guessed he was a football player. The handsome jock quarterback couldn't remember a time in his life when other men had not excited and attracted him more ...

10018 SAILORS WE
Jim learns what a sailor's life is like with the help of his new found friend, Carl. At the same time, pirates take over the ship and they use and abuse the captain and his grandson. This experience greatly changes their lives.

10019 BROTHERS
Devoted to his younger brother, Tommy faces a year of torment after he is discovered by that brother in an intimate situation. This year of pain and guilt culminates with the discovery of his brother's death and the circumstances surrounding it.

10020 SEXUAL ESPIONAGE
How much can two young civil servants be expected to give of themselves in the interest of their country? Phil and Beech are two such men who face this question as novice FBI agents.

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MAILMAN

(Continued from page 14)

Alas, what Werner says or, perhaps, propagates, is only too typical of what's going on in contemporary Western society, in particular. I speak of a diminution of the worth of personhood.

Furthermore, his contention that we harbor a secret fascination for dead human matter is absurd. For those of us who enjoy life and most of what's alive in it, our disgust at excrement is not a facade, but a genuine disinterest in that which is dead. For those into "scat" and all of its variations throughout the realm of S&M activities, an infatuation with pain, suffering and death is, of course, all too obvious. Perhaps the "scat" people and others like them would have relished the opportunity to experience the pain, suffering and death the Nazis perpetrated on gays in Europe not too long ago.

Sex is a celebration of life. Going down on a throbbing cock or penetrating a firm and willing ass or, in turn, being penetrated, is being about as alive as one can be. The fact that this kind of activity seems to be "dull" and "old-fashioned" to so many gays (and let's not always either justify or confuse gay norms and values with what's going on with straights) is an indication of their boredom and jadedness and general inability to either give or receive tenderness and affection.

For the sexually jaded and bored (most of the "hot" and trendy folks in our nation's leading seaboard cities, so it would seem), perhaps cannibalism is the next step we'll all soon be emulating. Oops, there goes my dick! Dull as it may appear to the aficionados of all sexual things new and "wonderful," I think I'll stay in the heartlands for awhile.

D.W., Chicago

ESTHETICS APPRECIATED

It was a pleasure to read the article, "The Rise and Fall of Bespoke Tailoring," in *Blueboy*. Your handling of the topic with an open mind and the author's ability to see clothes not for their snob appeal — if that be the case — but as an article of esthetics and careful planning, was workmanship in itself. Since menswear is a creative as well as financial outlet for me, it was clear that the article had a definite understanding of fine clothing; hopefully, it has helped people to understand that when they purchase a garment, the quality is reflected in its price. There are, of course, exceptions to every rule, but perhaps the next time someone buys an article of clothing — whether it be custom-made or ready-to-wear — there will be an appreciation of its conception and fruition.

Jim White, New York

WE

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Photo by PAEAN

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1978 — GSF

A NUMERICAL GUIDE TO LEARNING THE METRIC SYSTEM

To lessen the future shock of learning metric, we have provided a guide to make the whole process of converting just a little more palatable. And fortunately, metric tools such as these aren't difficult at all to find. In no time, you too can learn the metric system — all it takes is an inquisitive mind, eagerness to learn and a facility with "numbers."

12cm

(less than 5 inches)

Size appreciated only by those who claim size isn't important.

15¼cm

(6 inches)

Declared to be the average size of males in the Kinsey Report.

20cm

(8 inches)

A common request on tearoom walls

23cm

(9 inches)

Worth choking over.

30cm

(almost 12 inches)

Grand illusion.

METRIC TOOLS

A GAY GUIDE TO MEASURING UP METRICALLY

Scenario, 1988.

beeeeeep. beeeeeep. beeeeeep. click. "Good morning, and glad you've tuned in to the right spot on your radio dial. It's 7:30 and according to the weather-computer, we're going to have another fine day of unseasonably warm winter weather. Expect a high today of around 24° Celsius with the temperature dropping to a cool 10° tonight. Current temperature in downtown is 16° and at the airport, 15°."

Half asleep, I turn over and lower the volume of the radio DJ's enthusiastic morning report. My home computer unit switches itself on, but its usual low hum sends an exaggerated reverberation throughout my head. Arrrggghhh. All 70 kilograms of me feel like deadweight. Why did I have to down those three liters of chablis

BY STEVE HOLLEY

METRIC TOOLS (Continued from page 33)

singlehandedly last night?! What's great while dancing isn't quite as great for dancing out of bed the following morning.

I drag myself out of bed, determined to catch the 8:30 Rapid Rail downtown to work. Meanwhile my computer unit begins to wind down after having prepared my morning coffee, packaged a liter of orange juice and measured out the 450 grams of health-meal-concentrate for my lunch. A half hour later I arrive at the uptown rail terminal, feeling remarkably better after the two-kilometer walk from the apartment. Moments later I am whisked away by the computerized train which smoothly speeds to 90 km/per hour in no time. I start to follow the Global Newsbrief Program on the screen at the front of the train. Alongside the speeding train, the freeway traffic is at a virtual standstill, seeming to move only a few meters at a time. What a relief to no longer be dependent upon an automobile, especially with gasoline approaching 30¢ a liter these days. As I watch the traffic, I simultaneously focus on a reflection in the window of someone sitting across the aisle from me. I study the reflection for a minute — dark, curly hair, chiseled facial structure, contemplative eyes, a reflected flash from something around his neck. Interesting. As I turn around, my gaze penetrates his — for seconds — then his eyes dart from me up to the news screen. Hmmmm, reeeal nice ... the brief encounter was quite intriguing. Immediately my attention diverts from getting to work ... to more amorous desires, even if it means not staying on the right track, so to speak. And we're still cruising at about 90 km/per hour ...

"What's the next stop?" I hear myself ask. He leans over, and in a partially muffled voice responds, "I can't say that I-uh know for sure (great voice), but maybe we should just get off on it ... uh-h-h, at it, and find out for ourselves." He manages a momentary smile, then lowers his eyes. Sexy devil.

I press the exit signal then notice what had reflected on the chain around his neck. 20+. Twenty plus! Are you kidding? Well, I can certainly get into that. Ordinarily I would regard flaunting one's size as a little weird, but the effect this time runs right past my mind and directly to my own stiffening rod. The train stops and as we both exit, I steal a glance at a noticeable thickness descending halfway down to his knee ... give or take a centimeter or two.

Luckily, we are less than a kilometer from one of the city's greenbelt areas, and wasting few words, we jointly head for some heavy foliage. And to make a short story long (and hard), the heavy foliage quickly led to some heavy sucking ... as I proceeded to suck that long, thick, juicy cock — all 20 centimeters of it.

Life in the future metric world will take some getting used to but, of course, some things, at least in the gay world, may fortunately never change. Though many Americans are vehemently resistant to the metric conversion, the change *is* underway and conversion *is* going to come about. Gerald Ford signed the Metric Conversion Act of 1975 which called for voluntary conversion to the metric system, and officials predict we should all be "born again" the metric way by the early-to mid-'80s. Thus far the American public has taken a sluggish attitude toward the change, but the government has already committed itself. There's no turning back.

Upholding their reputation for being *au courant*, informed gays should start becoming adept with the new system, and thus be up on the inevitable conversion to metric. After all, what self-respecting gay person would want to be left in the dark when it comes to "measuring up"? A truly informed person shouldn't so much as flinch when offering a ride to some strapping hitchhiker who asks to be taken about *five kilometers* down the road. Five kilometers, huh? The enlightened reaction is to drive the three miles, then smoothly suggest that it is only another ten or so kilometers to your place, so why not drop by there and get a little better acquainted.

As an average, unassuming citizen, you may have a few misgivings about being able to cope with all this metric madness. ("Oh, I'll learn it when the time comes." "They're not *really* gonna change, are they?") Well, as is the trend in these times, there is the bad news and the good news. Bad: it *is* really going to happen, and the time is fast approaching. The good news is that recent converts in Australia and Canada insist that the change isn't nearly as traumatic as they had expected. The people at the U.S. Bureau of Standards say that the important thing to remember is that "eventually translation from our customary units to metric will not be necessary, because metric is simply a new language for communicating measurement information." Simply said, when you go to the store to buy a liter of milk, there will be no reason to try to calculate how many quarts that is. And according to other reports from countries who have converted, it is necessary to master only a few units to get by in everyday living — the meter, the liter and the kilogram.

Of special concern to many people is what affect metric will have on cooking. While many experts think all ingredients should be weighed, many people believe the cook has "measured" too long to change to scales. A person who cooks will not need to throw away favorite recipes or cookbooks. For metric recipes, metric measuring spoons are now on the market and measuring cups marked in both milliliters and ounces, as well as in fractions of a cup, will facilitate metricooking. Experts agree, however, that if you cannot cook with customary units, the chances of your doing any better with liters and grams are slim.

The next question you may ask before being led into this unfamiliar system: is there any truth to the rumor that the metric conversion is actually part of a subversive enemy plot? Why, absolutely! That is, if you can implicate that fiery radical, our 3rd U.S. President, Tom Jefferson. In 1790, Jefferson proposed a measurement system of units based on ten, just like our money. His plan designated ten feet as a decad, ten decads a rood, ten roods a furlong and ten furlongs a mile. Congress didn't go for his scheme, but on the other side of the Atlantic, the French were thinking along the same lines. The French Revolution was raging and there was a renewed interest in science. The French Academy of Sciences was commissioned to produce a system of measurement, which would be both scientific and simple. Prior to that time, measurements were confusing and inconsistent. To the ire of the "people," most of these measures had been based arbitrarily according to some king's fancy. Not exactly proletariat. For instance, England's King Henry I is credited with establishing the yard as the distance from the tip of his regal nose to his fingertips. In the tenth century, the inch was designated by the width of the knuckles on Kind Edgar's thumb. Charlemagne decided the foot would be the length of his own — about 12.7 inches.

Imagine a measurement based on the size of LBJ's earlobes, one derived from the size of Nixon's nose, or an amount determined from the size of one of Queen Elizabeth's hats!

The French seemed to have come up with the "crème de la crème" of the systems. The basic unit of length would be a portion of the earth's circumference, not some king's anatomy. The "mètre," taken from the Greek "metron," meaning "a measure," would be one ten-millionth of the length of the earth's meridian between the Equator and the North Pole. Measures for capacity (volume) and mass (weight) would be derived from the meter, thus relating each basic unit to each other and all of them to the universe. The liter (the volume unit) was derived by cubing a tenth of a meter. The weight of a liter of water represented the basic unit of mass, the kilogram. By act of Congress, the Metric System has been legal in the U.S. since 1866, but the country has always managed to back down. Our representative even signed the Treaty of the Meter in Paris in 1875, endorsing the internationally preferred metric system. But there was bitter opposition from American citizens, from labor and from big business. Anti-metric forces published pamphlets in the 1920s with xenophobic blasts against the "foreign menace."

(Continued on page 75)

THE MILAN PROJECTION

CONNECTION

PARIS MILAN
THE CONNECTION

PHOTOGRAPHED BY AMANDA SPOSITO

Thierry Mugler's collection, inspired by Flash Gordon.

Valentino evening shirt and tie in pink satin.

Multi-pleated pants and military caps by Kenzo.

Quilted waterproof pants by Caumont.

The 1978 European fall and winter collections — touchstones for American menswear designers as well as consumers — continue the pervasive trend toward careless chic. The Parisian and Milanese designers excel with innovative flourishes and omissions that clearly indicate a major reassessment of the outer man. The new (and traditional) fabrics, the new layering, the casual bravura of the new male silhouette were all captured for *Blueboy* by Daniela Morera and Amanda Sposito, whose reportage suggests both the style and substance of The Paris-Milan Connection.

Missoni's big mohair sweaters.

The mouton blousons by Caumont.

Enrico Coveri's zippered leathers.

Striped sweaters, scarves & ties by Missoni.

Americans have long since found Giorgio Armani's sophisticated contemporary clothes to their liking. This year, Armani — probably the most accessible of the Italian designers — perpetuates his fame and the careless (although not care-free) look he originated with a dashing collection of blousons, shirts, sweaters and rainwear. Amazingly, the parts are interchangeable.

Armani's leather and lambswool blouson ...

High negligence in full tweed ...

Bomber-style jackets with velvet pants ..

THE PARIS MILAN CONNECTION

Armani's poplin raincoats with flannel pants . . .

The newest one-button jacket.

Albini's suede jeans with chastity belt.

Short jackets and ties by Basile.

ARABIAN KNIGHTS

BY M. GEORGE HADDAD/ILLUSTRATED BY EMANUEL SCHONGUT

"There is much in my country which the West chooses to ignore," states Fahd, a Saudi Arabian of noble birth, currently studying engineering at UCLA. "For example, there are an estimated 400,000 slaves in my country. Yes, slavery *still* exists in the world today, particularly in Arabia and the Gulf states...And out of a population of about 6,000,000, this is a very large percentage.

"Also, Americans choose to dwell on the fact of the harem, and they believe every Arab has 20 wives. But Mohammed decreed no man could have more than four wives, and this was actually an improvement; before then, men had as many as 200 wives! Today, a few men — mostly the royal family and very wealthy men — have many dozen wives and concubines, but the harem is diminishing. Another thing; no one ever notices the meaning of the total separation of the sexes in our cultures, of how close male relationships are. The fact is, ours is a homosexually oriented society."

Fahd is one of the few Arabs willing to talk about homosexuality in his culture, for although it is widespread, it is still a taboo subject to discuss abroad, with foreigners. For example, he must refrain from supplying his last name, for fear of being recalled to Riyadh, where his father runs a minor government ministry and has a profitable business selling Mercedes to the nouveau riche.

"Most students in America and Europe from my country," he explains, "are of good family or royal family. We have much to lose by speaking loosely, and even though many of us are bisexual or gay, we watch what we say."

Like many of his countrymen, Fahd has had at least a few gay experiences — although he is engaged and will marry upon his homecoming. His reticence to describe his private sexuality stems as much from fear of revealing his gay side as from discomfort with the topic of sex.

Says Ahmed, a bona fide gay from the port city of Jeddah: "Sex is a forbidden conversational topic for us. Sex with men is considered useless by many Moslems, and sex with women is considered dirty. So we make jokes about politics, leaders and foreigners, rather than our sex lives or organs. Ironically, the richest Arab countries are also the most puritanical."

The 21-year-old is studying marine biology at U.C., Santa Barbara and hopes to move to neighboring Kuwait after completing his studies, possibly to work for the country's mammoth water desalinization program in an administrative capacity. Ahmed insists there was never any pressure put on him by his family to marry or "go straight," as long as he didn't "flaunt' his sexual preference.

"Arabs don't mind two men being very close, touching or even having sex, if they are in a close, old-fashioned relationship like that between bedouins in the desert. But they very much frown on the male homosexual who is involved in passive sex, since he is considered no better than a woman. Also, sex between women is completely looked down on, for men are said to be the summit of creation."

How widespread is homosexuality in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other oil states? It's anybody's guess, for statistics are not a part of the Moslem way of life, and even population figures are only official guesswork. Besides, there has never been any kind of sexual survey or study within the Arabian peninsula, nor is there likely to be — at least in this century. But there are well-hidden instances of gay behavior and lifestyles, particularly at the top.

Fatima is a Saudi princess, married to one of the grandsons of King Faisal (who was assassinated a few years ago). As one of three wives accompanying her husband while he studies stateside, she has little to do, for few Moslem Arab females pursue even a rudimentary education, especially the high-born. With so much spare time, women like Fatima find a favorite outlet in the sport of gossip, highly developed back home in the various wings of Riyadh's royal palace. And while men are reticent to discuss such things (which some even deny exist, to paint a cleaner, morally invincible picture of their country), she and other women aren't.

"Oh, yes," she beams with child-like pleasure in revealing a secret, "there are male harems kept by a few of the older princes, desert sheikhs and wealthy merchants in the cities. These are either in addition to a female harem or to one wife, for those who choose to be 'modern.' I would not know about true homosexuals who keep harems, for my only contacts are through other women, as the sexes do not mix in my homeland.

"But it is true that male harems exist. They are well-hidden, of course, because they are maintained solely for pleasure, not for having children and serving Allah. Even so, there are many in Jeddah and Riyadh — the deserts, I am not acquainted with," she sniffs haughtily. "The men who maintain such harems are necessarily rich, for the young men in their service could find good-paying jobs if they chose to. The foreigners, especially."

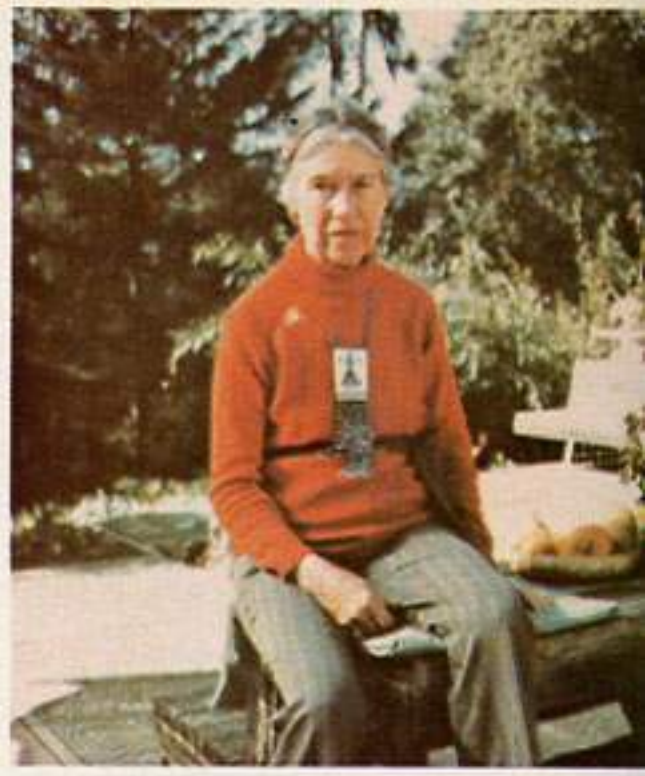
(Continued on page 81)

EM
Schongut

The makers of *Word Is Out* feel that their film offers, to the gay public especially, the understanding that there are options. If one chooses to begin and end life in a gay bar, that's alright; but, as gay culture comes into its own, there are choices and variety out there as well, if one takes an active role in making things happen. These are some of the people who've taken active roles in *Word Is Out*.

A MATTER OF CHOICE

BY MARVIN J. BEVANS



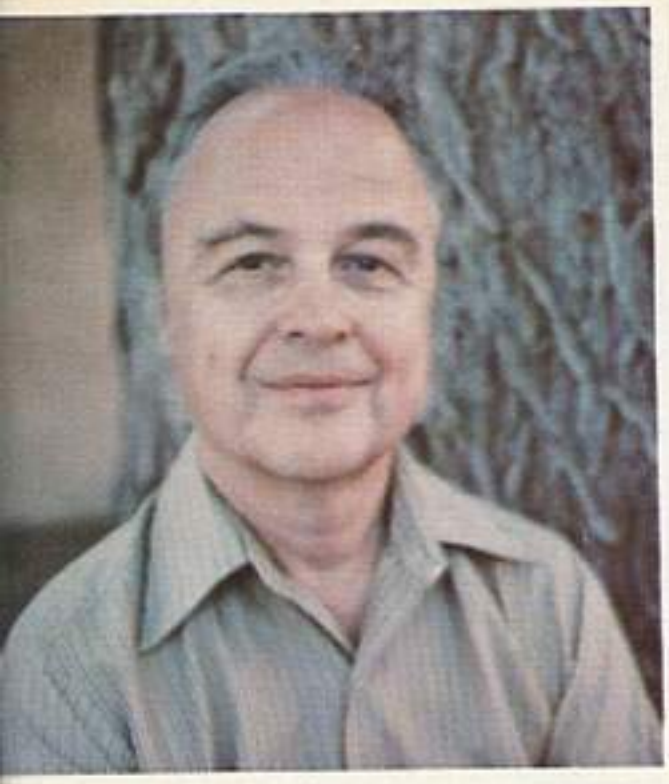
In San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles and Boston and every key American city, the *word* has been out these many months about the new documentary film, *Word Is Out*, which successfully zeroes in on the gay experience in America, both today and in the recent past. A movie created by San Francisco's Mariposa Film Group (they conceived of the idea some five years ago), their pioneer effort brings to the screen for the first time a sense of gay dignity and humanism and doubtless will remain a classic to future generations.

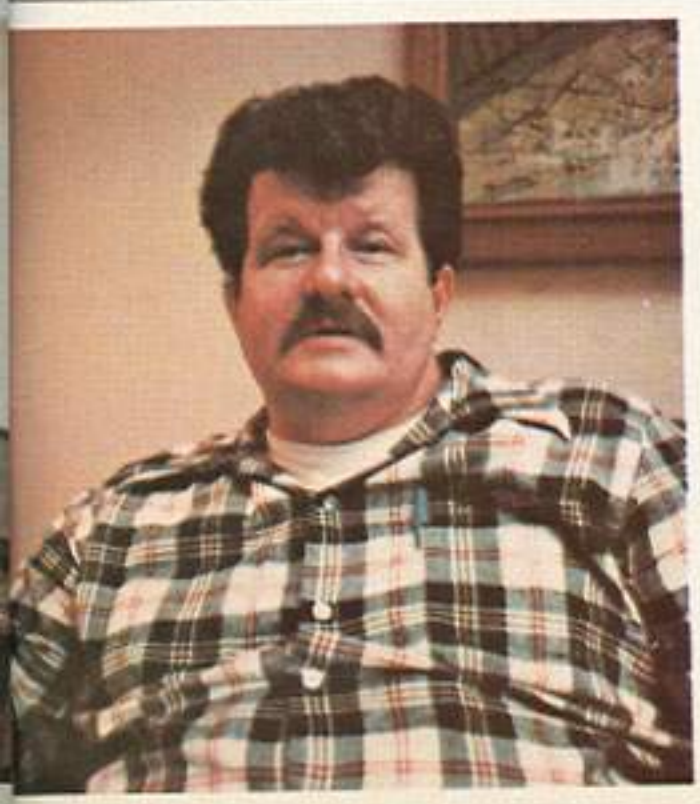
The idea for the film germinated initially from young filmmaker Peter Adair, who set out to make a classroom film which utilized gay people as role models. With his sister, Nancy, and later on with Veronica Selver — all "out-of-the-closet" gays — he proceeded to interview fifty candidates, eight of whom were selected and later presented as part of raw footage to 200 gays in Berkeley, California. The response was tremendous as the audience laughed, cried and rose to their feet applauding.

"We knew then we had something," Peter explains, "but we also realized that the film had to get bigger. The problem was that people kept taking this film as a statement of gay life. They weren't just eight people to the audience, so we felt a responsibility to the audience to continue the film and get as divergent a mix with regards to race, class, geography and age, as was possible."

With that in mind, the group set out by first placing an ad in a local newspaper and recruiting the services of Andrew Brown and Robert Epstein (later, toward the conclusion of the filmmaking process, Lucy Massie Phenix joined the group). They then divided themselves and scattered to different parts of the country conducting individual interviews. At least 200 prospective candidates were taped be-

(Continued on page 91)





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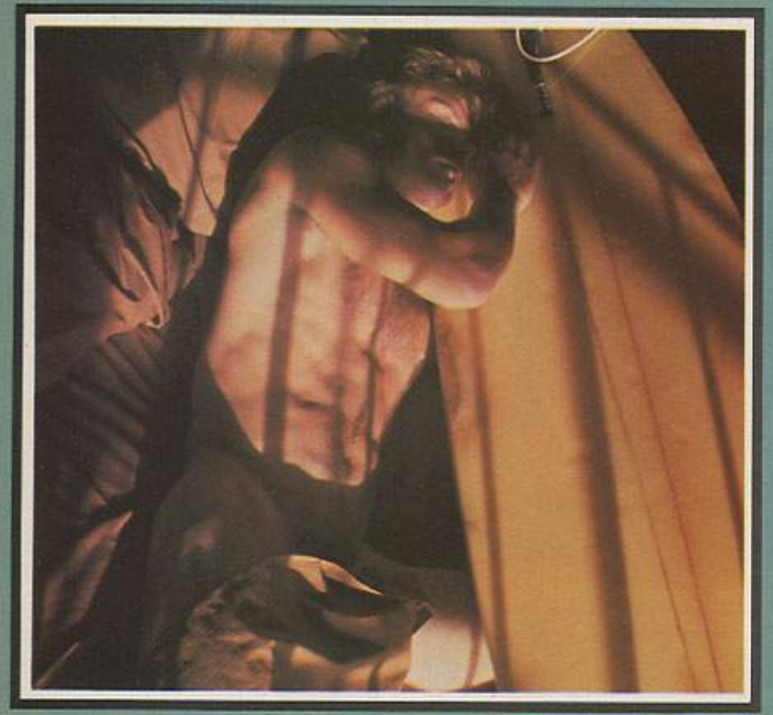

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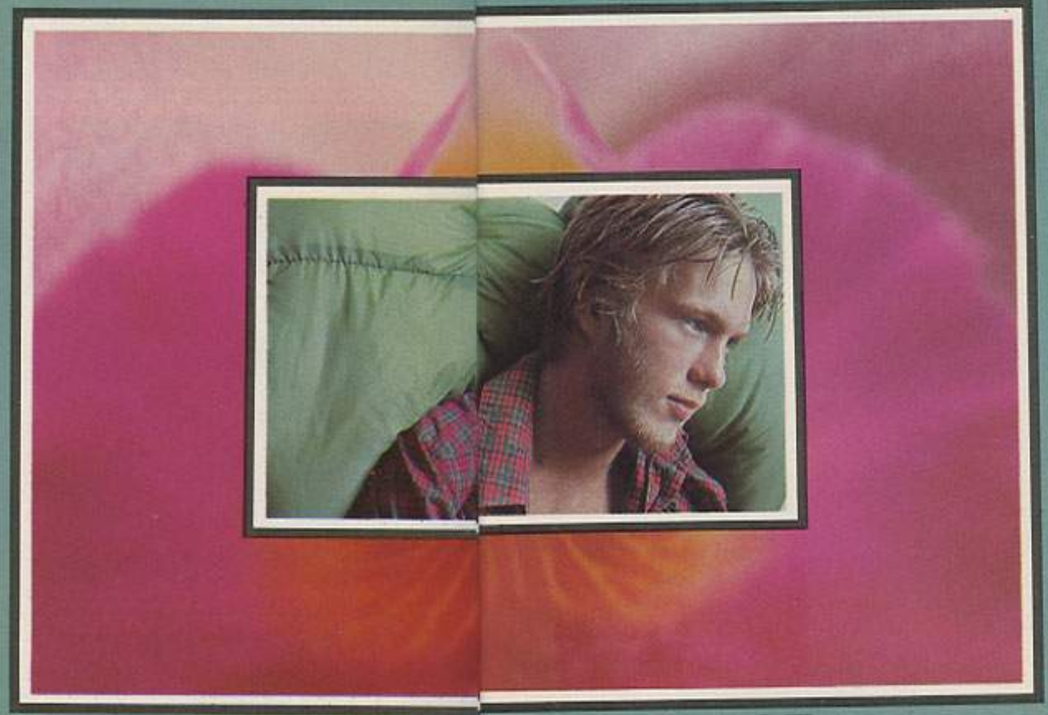

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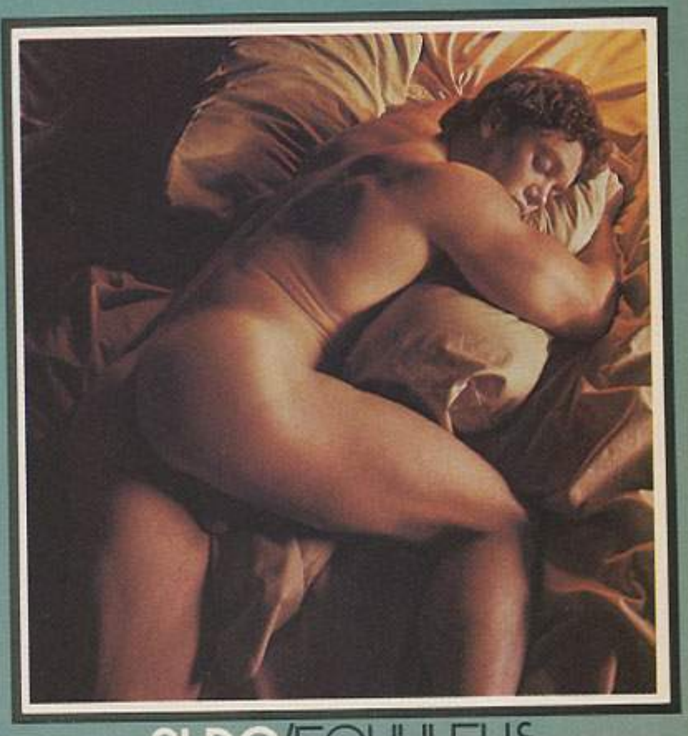
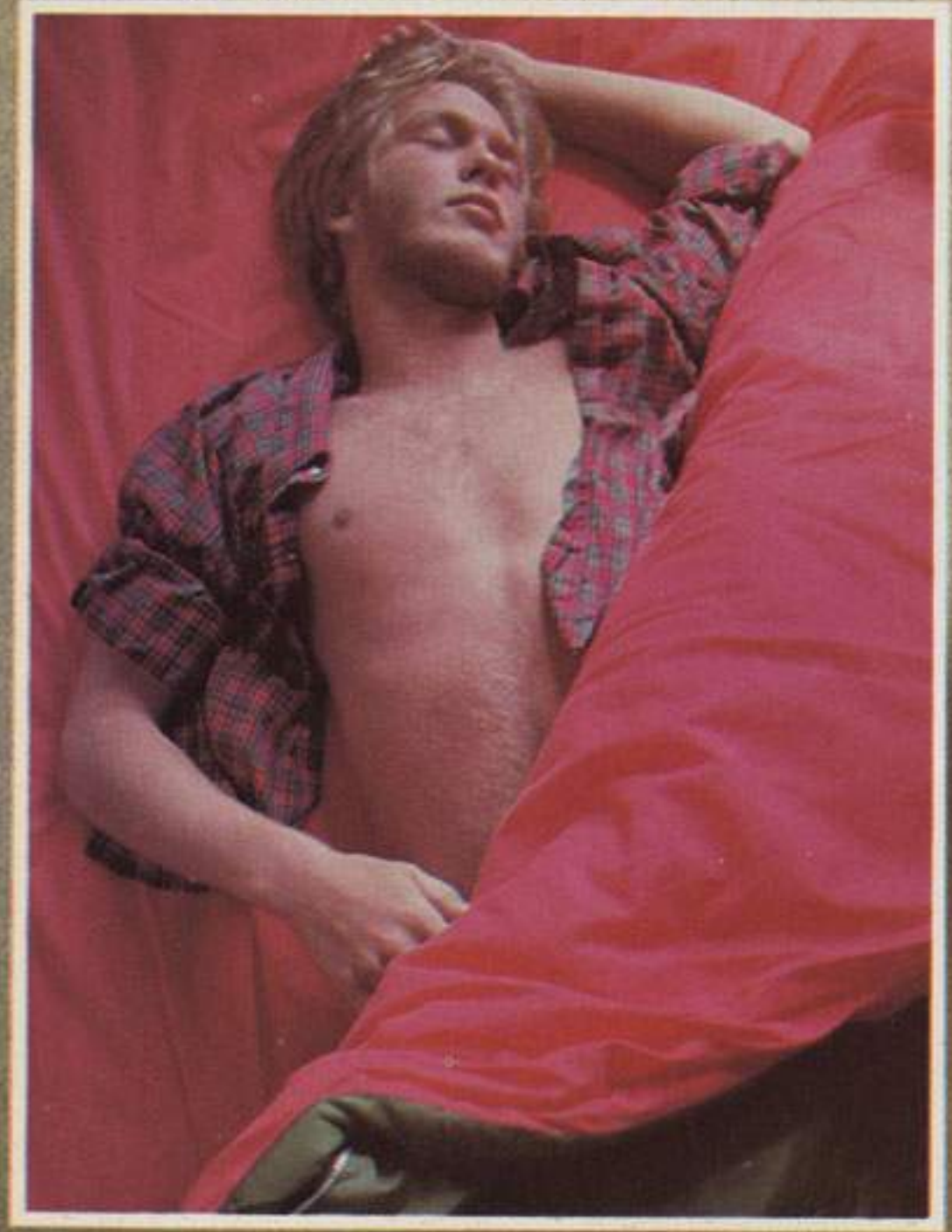


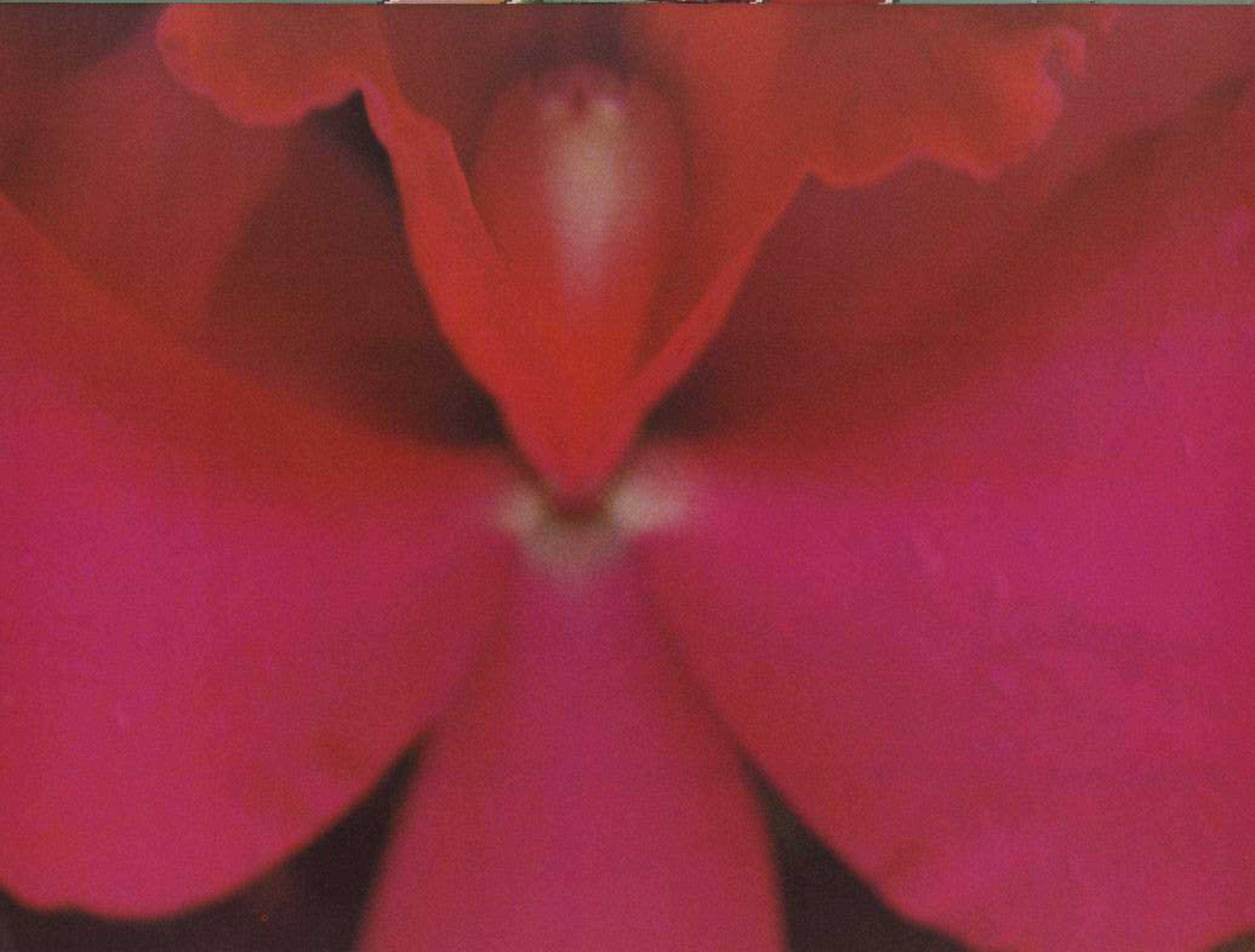
ALDO/EQUULEUS

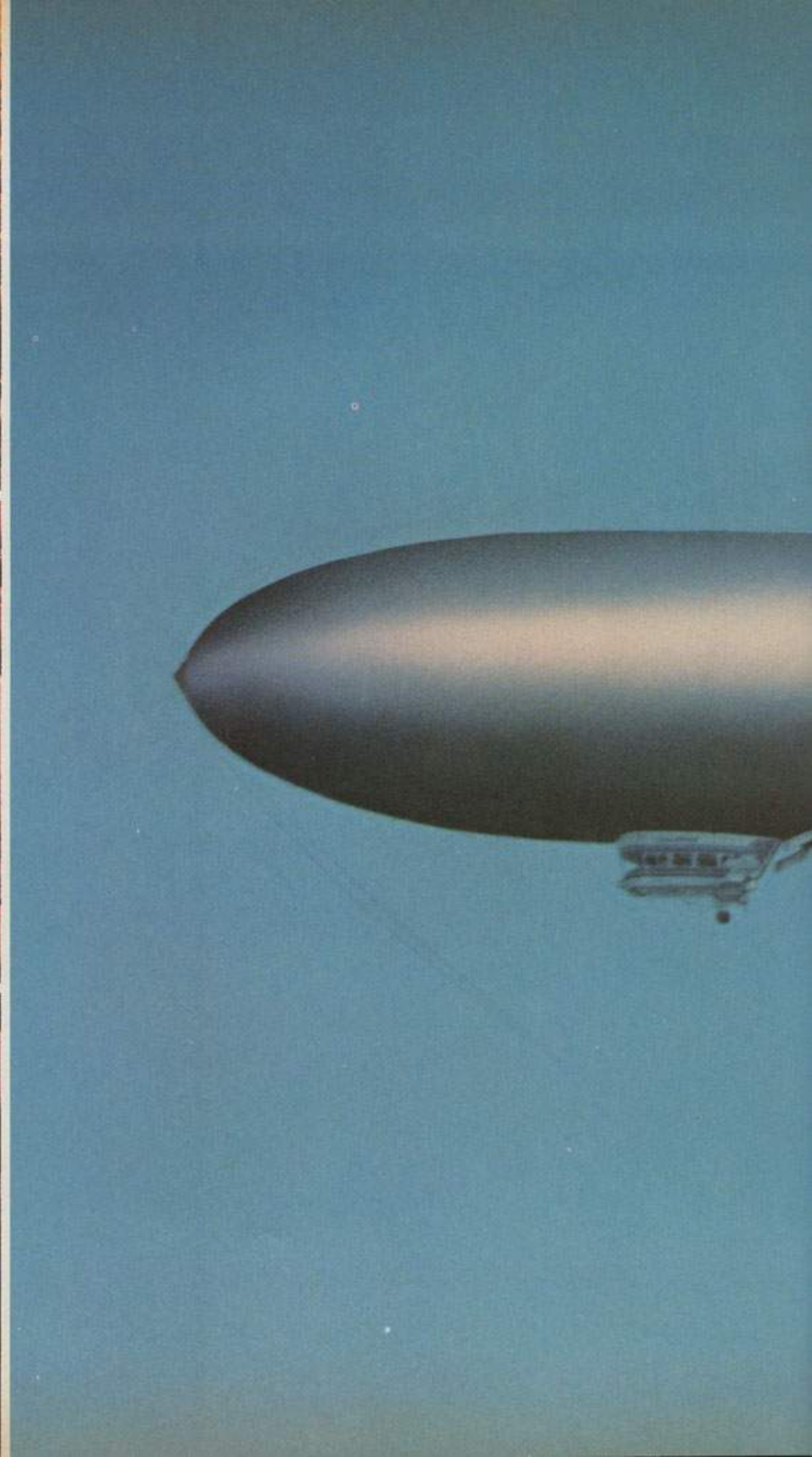
AND DREAMERS

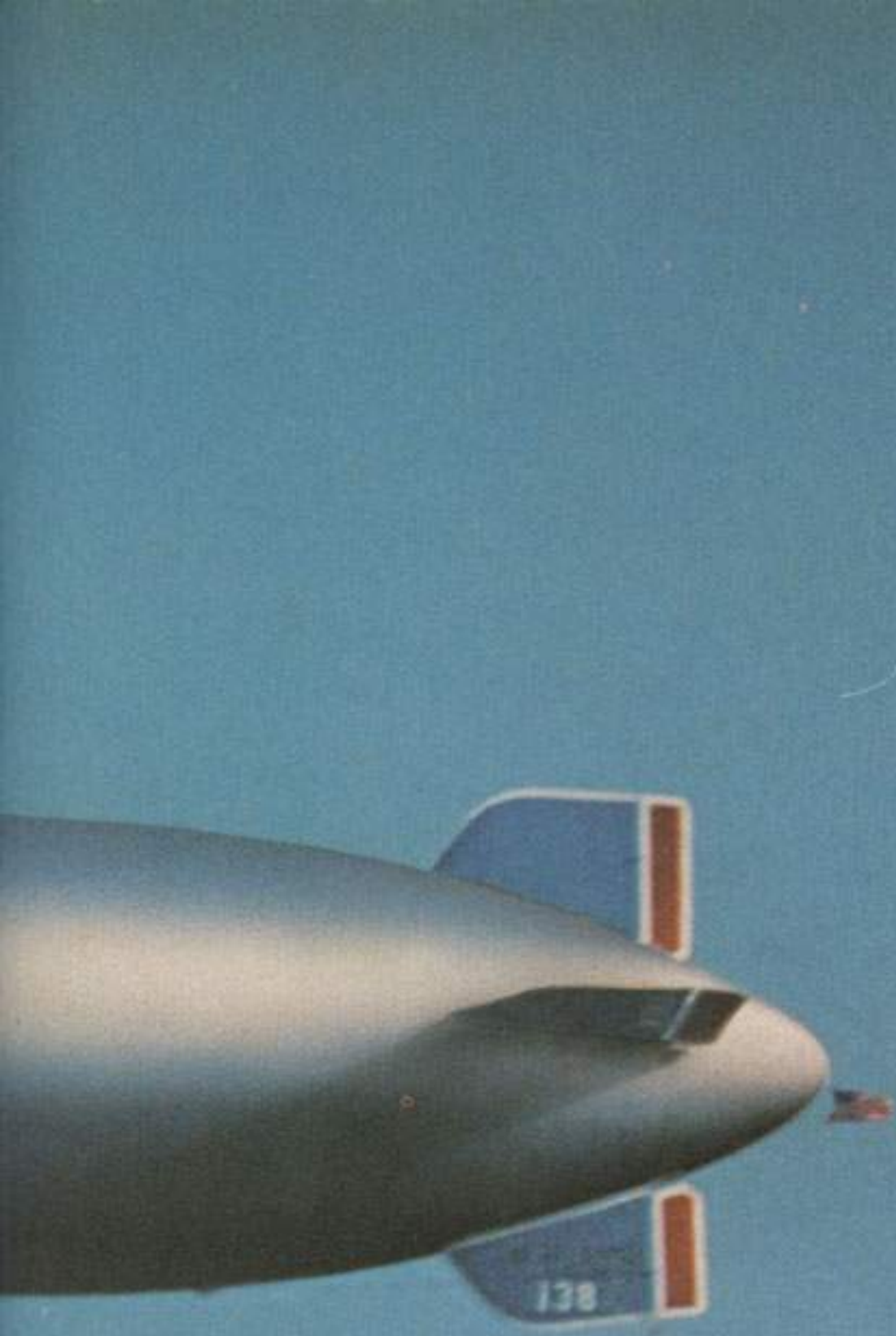
CYRUS
THENIGHTSURFER

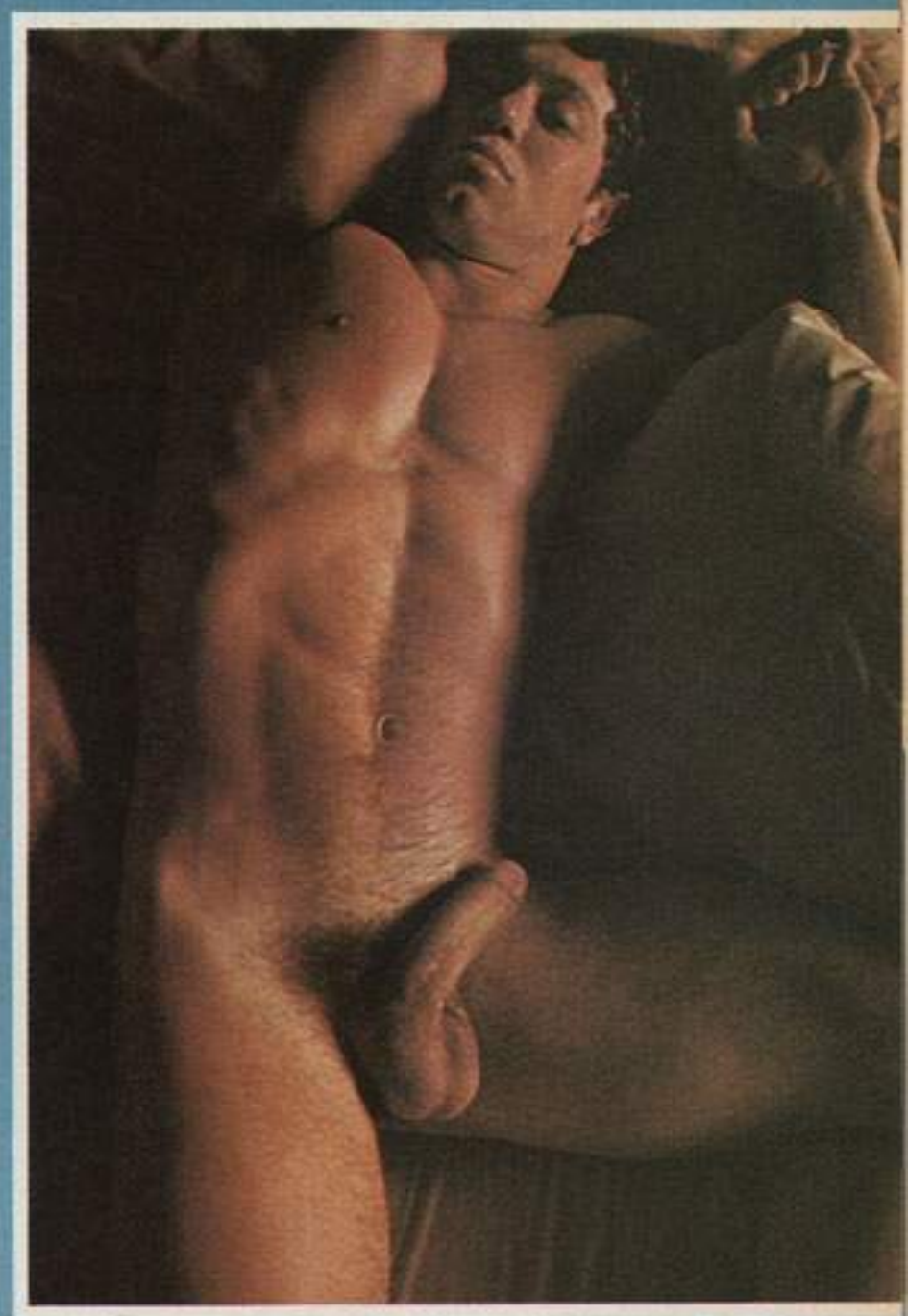
DUANE
RENASCENCE











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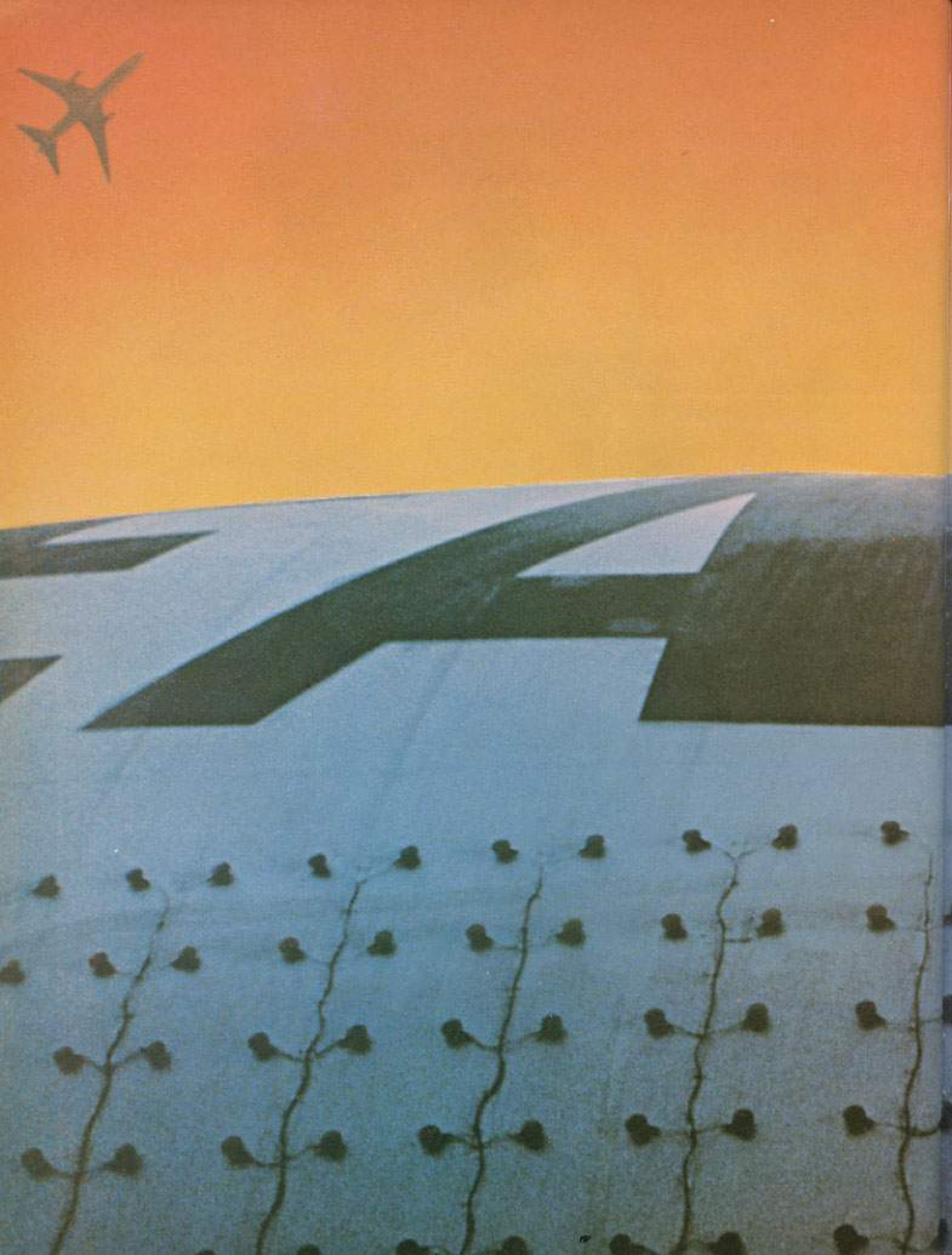


DIAMONDS IN THE SUNSHINE

BY EDWARD PATRICK/PHOTOGRAPHED BY SAM NOTABARTOLO

Sitting by a West Hollywood swimming pool the day after my 32nd birthday and nursing a champagne hangover seemed as good a starting point as any to begin an article on gay lifestyles in Los Angeles. After six months here from New York City (including one quick visit back to the Big Apple) I feel smart enough to comment on L.A.-land.

It's been a crazy period of adjustment to sex and suntans, drug-crazed Hollywood youth, and diamonds in the sunshine in a land where you can meet an out-of-work Crown Prince or an actor who started his career on the unemployment line when he answered an extra call for *New York, New York*.

You can sit in the sunshine or hang out in darkened cocktail lounges or western bars, surrounded either by three-piece-suits or the cookie cutter cowboy look of levis, boots, flannel shirts and Clint Eastwood hats. There's no Fiorucci West but there is Worn Out West where you can trade them in for somebody's old jeans complete with carefully worn-through peekhole. Then you put your Guccis in their red bags and head for the Hollywood Army surplus store for a pair of cowboy boots.

L.A.-land is a town that starts earlier and closes earlier than New York with bars open at noon for a crowded fourteen hours. They're never empty at any hour, the juke box blaring *Here You Come Again* for the ten thousandth time, the pool tables crackling and pinball machines jumping. For a crazy Hollywood minute, eyes trying to adjust from the bright sunshine of a Santa Monica Boulevard afternoon, you can stand in The Stud or The Rusty Nail and swear you've been transplanted to a convention of jobless Marlborough Men. There's an L.A. swagger to the boys at the bar, caused in part by the bulge in their pants. There must be a sign in Kansas that reads "Over 9 inches, head West" because out here big cocks are the rule rather than the exception.

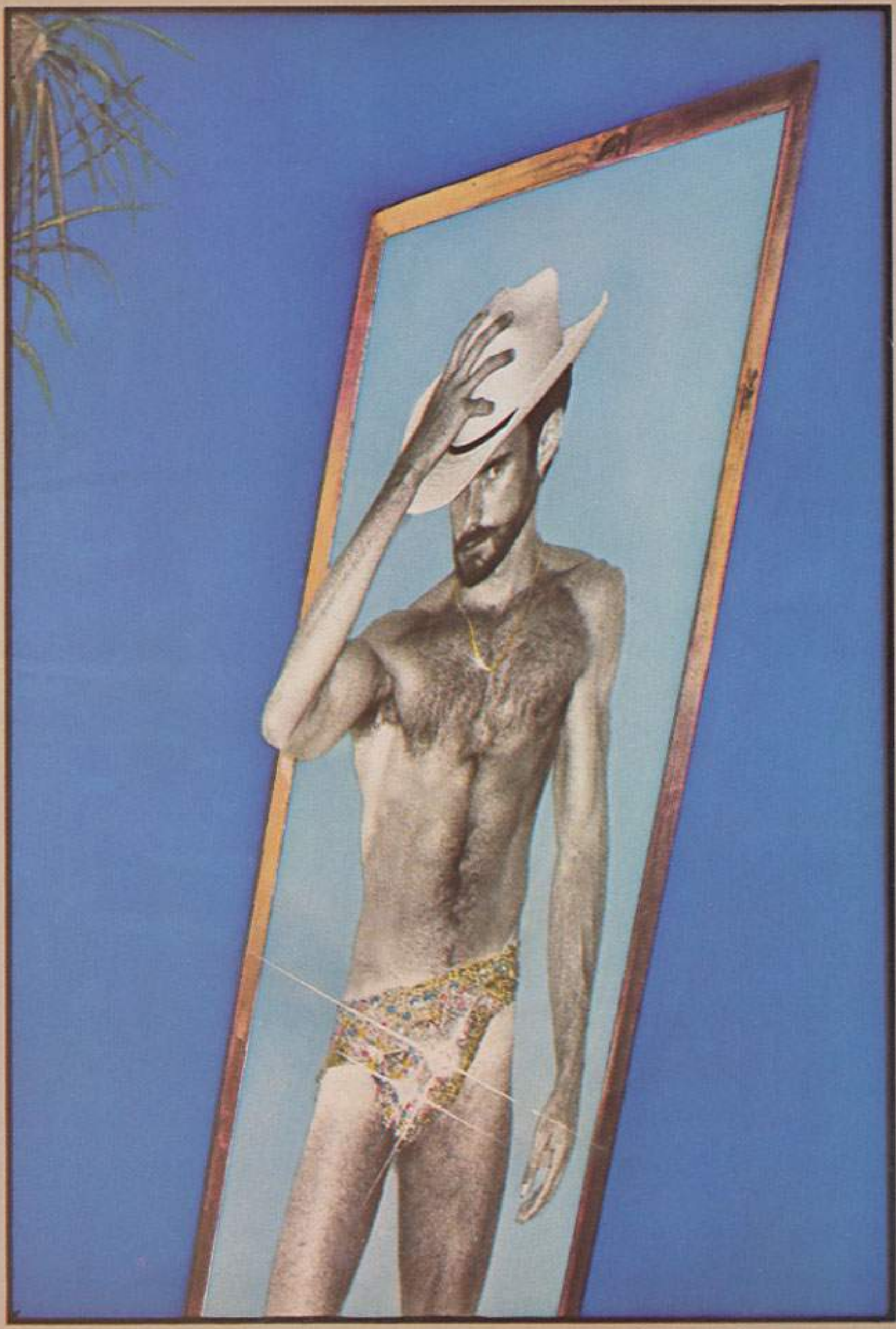
Hollywood is a town on the make and, to many, it still packs a potent wallop as the dream capital of the world. People come from all over the world still thinking that a handsome face and a big dick will open all the doors. Their bulging baskets are their passports to success, and for a new face in town, there is a brief moment when all those smalltown dreams do seem possible. And, believe it or not, people still say "You oughtta be in pictures." I got that line at my first Hollywood dinner party.

But then there's a lot of talk in Hollywood. And lots of talkers. Unlike more private New Yorkers, men in Hollywood will tell you their life story — or at least the version of it they're believing at the moment — at the opening of a beer bottle. It takes a while to wade through the bullshit, but once you do there are some interesting tales to be heard. Especially from the hustlers.

They're an obvious part of L.A. life, kids just in from following that sign in Kansas, lining Santa Monica Boulevard between Highland and Genesee with their thumbs out looking for a rider but not necessarily a ride. $20 to $35 will get you a cock to suck in a side street or a parking lot and in a perverse sense of honesty they're one of the few things in L.A.-land you have to pay cash for — no credit cards here.

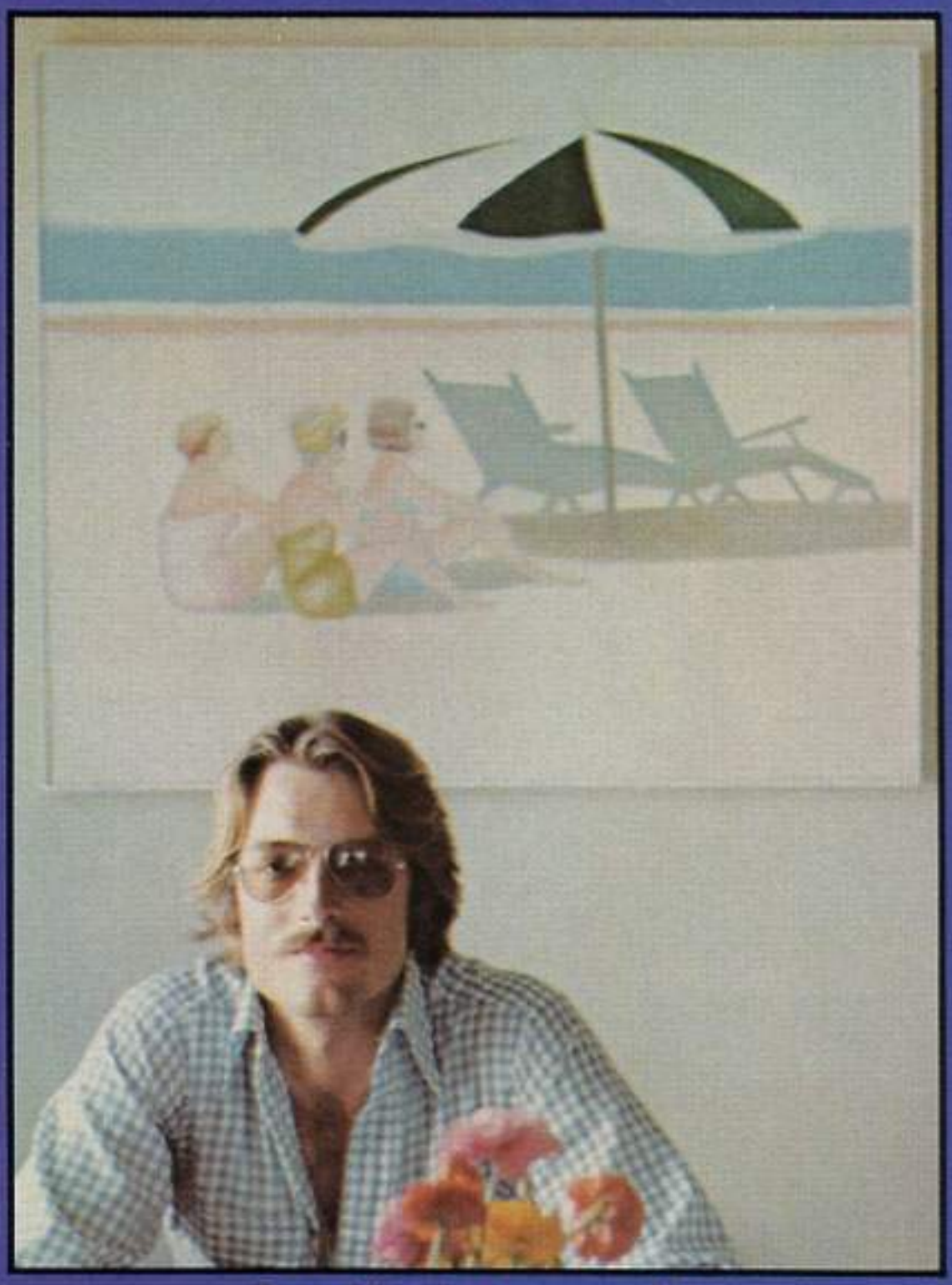
I met one in a coffee shop who opened the conversation by asking how fresh my dill pickle was (I was having a sandwich at

(Continued on page 73)



BLUEBOY INTERVIEW

PERRY KING



Perry King has appeared in such films as *Mandingo*, *The Lords of Flatbush*, *Bad* and *Lipstick*. In this interview, he talks about his latest film, *A Different Story*, and about being a serious actor with a predominately gay following.

BY NEIL FEINEMAN

"I hate that man, Thomas Wolfe," Perry King says with quiet conviction. "He killed my grandfather."

"What?" I ask, wondering if I heard right.

"Max Perkins was my grandfather; you know, the literary editor. He had Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, but he liked Wolfe the best. Anyway, after Wolfe had made it, he left my grandfather, just left him. Oh, years later, Wolfe sent him a letter apologizing, but the damage had been done."

I stop, caught totally off guard. I don't know what I expected from a movie actor who has made his biggest impressions playing juvenile delinquents *(Slaughterhouse Five, The Lords Of Flatbush)*, inept hit-men (Andy Warhol's *Bad)*, and Southern decadence*(Mandingo)*, but it certainly wasn't this.

So, opting for honesty, I tell him that I had no idea what he would be like, that I had found out he had gone to Yale and then to Julliard and was surprised. Still, though, I couldn't predict what he would be like as a person.

"Good," he smiles, "that's good."

Which leads to a conversation about Fellini's now-famous quote about Donald Sutherland's almost total malleability and thus his desirability as an actor.

"I think if that's true of an actor," King begins, "it's the highest part of an actor. When Fellini said that, it irritated me slightly — only, I'm sure, because I'm an actor. But it did sound like Fellini was saying, therefore, that Sutherland happened to be a piece of clay that he, Fellini, the Great Master, could then mold into a shape. But if an actor is that way, it's by choice. I mean, it's not a non-skillful thing to be, I think.

"The greatest hero, the actor I admire the most, whose work I admire the most, is Alec Guiness and he's probably known for that the most, for being a Mr. Cipher. Each part places its own set of physical and emotional dimensions on Guiness so that you really can't recognize Guiness underneath it all and I just love that, love to watch it. I mean,when you think about things like *The Lady Killers*. But there's absolutely no connection to the real Alec Guiness. I mean, it's so far removed. And yet it's wonderful, the caricature. Remember," and suddenly Perry King moves into high gear, whips off his aviator glasses, shakes his head, animates his voice, and becomes Alec Guiness, "remember how he was combing his hair and at the end, when he gets more panicky, more and more hair was coming out. Oh," he laughs, "I just love it."

Not that the ability to immerse yourself in a role doesn't have its own problems. "Look," he continues, "the trend today, the trend and the pressure today from everyone is to be a personality, to be a star, to be uniquely yourself and nothing else and always remain yourself whatever you do. And I think even Donald Sutherland falls into that trap of being himself like in *Klute*, where he failed for me because he ended up bringing so much of himself, of Donald Sutherland, into the movie."

Even this early in the conversation, I realize that here is someone who really cares about acting. But so many of the movies have been cheap, disappointing, unsuccessful. So I ask him how he feels about his movies.

"Well," he answers, "I don't like the results of them. But, then again, I'm not very involved in the results. It's the process I really care about."

"Then it doesn't bother you that your movies have been so unsuccessful?"

"Sure, you're subject to people's reactions whether you want to be or not. But when people say why did you do that, the fact is that all the parts were cut, and cut so that they're not seeing what was shot, what we accepted on paper, but something else. So in that sense, it's disappointing because you have to deal with people's reactions and people's reactions, to a large part, determine what you get to do next. I mean, it is frustrating because it's a business in which the great virtue is to make money, not to be good.

"And I'm much more interested in being an actor. The money quickly takes care of itself — beyond a certain amount of money, I find more than anything else that it's a pain in the ass. As long as you have a certain amount that you can function with on a reasonably pleasant level — which isn't a lot, it really isn't — then, beyond that point, it becomes a terrible hassle. You then have to take care of it, which is a real drag; you have to invest it and protect it and hire all these people who send you bills all the time. My grandfather used to say, and I'll always remember it, 'the more the man is, the less he has.'"

And even though stardom entails more than lots of money, King approaches it the same way he does money. "It's like, the people I know who've made it 'big' certainly seem a lot less happy than they used to be. And I think the reason is very specific. I don't think it's simply the loss of privacy or the hassles by people who put pressures on you. It's more specific than that. When you have a goal — you know, it's the old saying about you had better be careful what goals you choose for youself because you might get them.

"I think, for example, that's what killed Freddie Prinze. All his life, he had in his mind, which society trains you to do, getting to that kind of place that he got to. That was the goal, to be famous and rich and powerful — and when he got there, he would have achieved nirvana and that would mean his life would be glorious. And, of course, when he got there, everybody that had known him before came to him and said, 'God, you're so lucky, you've got it all,

everything, wonderful!' And, of course, I'm sure he wasn't happy at all.

"Because all you do is exchange one set of problems for another. There's no place in life where you don't have problems anymore, frustrations anymore, irritations anymore — and I'm sure that what happened to him, more than anything else, was that he felt very guilty for not being desperately happy with having gotten everything he ever tried for. And it's that sense of guilt that really gets people, guilt over the fact that they got what they always wanted and it doesn't matter. So, if you set up goals for yourself that you're not likely to reach, you're far better off because you have that to go to.

"Specifically, what's happened to friends of mine who've become very successful is that I feel in them a sense of loss; they lost the thing that was wonderfully driving all the time — so, rather than gaining when you make it big, you lose."

"So then," I ask, cattily hoping for some inadvertent contradictions, "you don't mind Winkler, Stallone, and Susan Blakely becoming bigger names than you?" (They were his co-stars in *Lords Of Flatbush;* he was top-billed.) "You don't resent their success?"

As I ask him the question, he is pouring himself his second cup of some disgusting instant decaffeinated coffee substitute my aunt has left at my apartment. ("All actors are addicted to coffee and cigarettes," he has told me earlier; if he is drinking a second cup, that must be true.) He looks up from the smelly brown mess, surprised.

"Resent? No, not at all. Look at Susie; actually, I'm sort of worried about her; I don't even know what's happened to her. She hasn't done anything for a long time; I suspect she's in trouble. And she was in such great shape after *Rich Man, Poor Man.*

"And Winkler and Stallone, they seem sort of trapped. We're still friends, even though I don't see either of them very often; we sort of allow ourselves to run into each other every so often. Anyway, I wouldn't really want their position. God, to get that kind of success and the thing that becomes obvious to me is all of a sudden you have a lot to protect, you know, you've got to protect your fame and take care of it."

Then, just as he's about to get too serious, he catches himself and laughs. "Hell, it's all relative. We go up and down and up again and are all going to end up in the old actor's home saying 'remember 1976' anyway."

Okay, so he's not interested in money or stardom, just in acting. Then, again, why all those crummy movies; don't they matter?

"They only matter," King feels, "to the degree that they put monkey wrenches in my freedom to do what I'd like to do; although, shit, looking back on it, I've never been in a real success yet. But I seem to work without ever having been in a successful film. The TV's *(Captins And Kings, Aspen, Hemingway)* been successful and that's good; I really like it. Did you ever see *Hemingway?* I loved it, me as Hemingway at 32. My grandfather was his editor and my mother knew him personally and I ..."

He is reminded of Margaux Hemingway, with whom he co-starred in *Lipstick.* "You know, the first day on the set, I went up to her. I started working on that right after *Hemingway* and I ran up to her and said, 'Guess what, I just played your grandfather and my grandfather was your grandfather's editor; and she just looked at me and walked away. She wasn't interested at all. I suppose she was more concerned about the film because it was her first. But that really surprised me. I thought she'd be so

Perry King in *A Different Story*: "What it's really about is being true to yourself."

kicked — and I don't even think she heard me."

He laughs, finding the joke on himself very funny. Then, as he thinks about it, he stops smiling. "I did *Lipstick* to get out of the sequel to *Mandingo,* which Dino (de Laurentis) had. He was, I must say, very kind to me. I loved the first one; up until now it was the only film I liked. And *Mandingo* had integrity, no one believes it, no one sees it that way, but it did.But the script of *Drum* had no integrity and I just couldn't stand it. So Dino was very kind and let me get out of it. But he said, 'All right, I'll do you a favor if you do me one. Do *Lipstick* for a couple of weeks.'

"And that was a great lesson for me and the reason why is because I love acting and I love to get up in the morning; I really love it — I mean, I jump up in the morning before the alarm. Nothing, nothing in the morning is more enjoyable than going to the set. And that's the only time in my life it hasn't been true — because I really didn't want to play that part.

"Usually it's exciting; it makes my heart beat faster to play a part. And in this case, my stomach would turn over. I'd think it was a nothing part, Margaux Hemingway's boyfriend, a boring person who was just an obligatory character as so many parts in film can be, and it scared the shit out of me because I'd go in there just desperate to finish the day — a classic case of what I've heard of other people doing in jobs like, I don't know, salespeople or pumping gas or other things that people say are such a bitch. I hated my job and I never had that feeling, ever in my life.

"And I don't know how, but I won't do it again because I thought, Jesus, I can't take chances with this or I'll lose the one thing that I really love to do. So I never ever again will sign options so that I put myself under the control of someone else. Which loses me a lot of parts because, most of the time, they demand you to commit yourself to something else; if what they put you in makes it, then they also want to reap some later profits, particularly TV stuff — anytime you do a mini-series or anything, any special, they always demand a series option for seven years and I won't sign them, which means in a lot of ways I can't do them. And that's too bad, because the ones I've done have been good."

Not that that has stopped him from taking on unusual, even bizarre roles. Like Andy Warhol's *Bad,* for instance, an X-rated movie about a ring of hit-women operating out of an electrolysis salon in Queens.

"I did *Bad* mostly as an adventure; it seemed an exciting thing to do; it seemed equivalent to back-packing in Tibet, equally dangerous. It's like a military attack or something; you're either going to go out and get slaughtered or going to win the day and be an incredible champion. It could have been a real breakthrough movie, *Bad* could have."

Instead, he feels it was a mess. "We were all making our own movies and that's terrible because anything that's good is good because it has one clear point of view that colors everything; one clear, central idea directed by one central mind. Unless you have some way of controlling it, so that one person, presumably the director, insists on and creates his own point of view, you'll have a hodgepodge and that's really what *Bad* is, a hodgepodge."

"Well then," I ask, "in order to protect your performance or exert that guiding force, why don't you direct?"

"Eventually, I want to. Only the directors I admire the most are, without exception, well, with one notable exception, they seem to be at least 37 or 38 years old. (Kind is 29.) It seems to me that to be a good, fine director, you have to have existed for a certain amount of time. Olivier said that he played Macbeth once when he was young and again when he was fifty and he said the time he played it when he was fifty was much better because he had lived longer, had lived enough to really be able to play the part better. I think that's true of di-

(Continued on page 83)

SIGNALS

BY FRANK MONROE

Saturday.

The whimpering of the kettle after I empty it to make my instant coffee.

An empty life full of things to be done.

The ping of the light bulb when I turn the lamp off.

A smear of green juice where I bruised the watermelon, cutting it. One slice for one person.

Loneliness.

Memory flashes. The whiteness of his smile. The innocent jut of his buns. The way his legs move when he walks.

I turn my head to listen to someone laughing across the street. The crackling of a candy wrapper blowing across the macadam of the parking lot. A sunset wind. The half moon. Later: The tubs. Steamy sex.

Monday.

My slippers hissing on the floor as I walk across the living room this morning. A pattern of sunbeams on the bedroom floor. The heavy gravity of sleep in hot weather, still pulling me back towards the bedroom.

Remembering Mike's flashing eyes, his sensuous lips, his nose that makes me want to kiss the tip of it. His nipples showing through a wet T-shirt. His brown body in Nelson's swimming pool, playful, like a sea otter.

I am getting a hard-on thinking of him.

A rabbit, and doves, feeding in the dry grass at the lake's edge. The smell of eucalyptus and pine. Green waters behind green pine needles cascading from brown branches. Haiku images.

Tuesday.

I might as well stop thinking around the fact and admit that the important thing these last few days is that I've dropped Mike, but I cannot stop thinking about him.

Mike is part Japanese, part Thai. He has a trim, lightly muscled body, beautiful Oriental eyes, and a personality sparkling with laughter and outrageous puns. When my phone rang during sex, he picked it up before I could reach it and told the caller: "Yeah! Fwank cannot come to de phone. He all *Thai*-ed up." He has trouble pronouncing his R's. The set of his brow looks thoughtful and kindly to Western eyes, but he can be swift and cruel.

At the River Club, I was moving to the beat of the music.

"Why ah you nevah still?" Mike asked.

"I'm afraid that if I ever stand still I'll get old," I replied, laughing.

"You *ah* old *now*," Mike said.

"Wicked child!" I remonstrated.

He smiled.

At such moments I feel that he is giving out signals I do not understand. I have missed some cue. Inscrutably, he never explains.

I am not old, but middle-aged. Average height, brown hair, blue eyes. Caucasian. Average-looking. I am an experimentalist. I enjoy new experiences. Usually. Strangers think they know me: "You look just like our neighbor Charles in Chowchilla," two old gentlemen told me yesterday.

Mike tells me that he loves me and wants me, but he keeps on seeing other men. He meets them at the *ofurosan*, the honorable tubs.

Sunday evening I called Mike, but Hans answered.

I did not mind that. The affair between Mike and Hans was over in 1975. They are just friends now. Sisters. When Mike first met him, Hans was foxy-looking and trimly European. Now he is turning Teutonically round. He has been having hair transplant operations, but his hair falls out as fast as the doctors transplant it. He hates combs.

When Hans answered the phone, Nelson was just arriving with his gear to spend the night.

"Look who's coming! Vell, I nefer!" said Hans on the telephone. "He's got his shafing kit. Looks like Nelson's going to stay all night with Mike. Do you want me to put Mike on the phone?" I said no and thanked him and hung up.

My patience with Mike ran out at that moment.

I do not enjoy looking at Nelson. His eyes have a heavy, sly look that Mike finds intriguing but I find repellent. Nelson's idea of how to make witty conversation is to needle you and put you down.

He owns an appliance store. "I'm independently wealthy. I don't have to work," he will say. Nelson expects us to kid him back, but Mike is unemployed and Hans has just been laid-off his engineering job. I am editing business textbooks at an office on Wilshire Boulevard. We do not find Nelson's remarks as funny as he himself does.

Looking under Mike's Christmas tree in December, Nelson said, "Actually, there weren't any reindeer at Bethlehem." His large moustache twitched into a wicked smile. Over lunch, on another day, Nelson said, "Rice is constipating, you know. That's why Orientals have slanted eyes, from straining on the potty."

I cannot see what Mike sees in him. Nelson's invitations are always Dutch treat, despite his wealth. But Nelson must be wiser than I think. Mike keeps going back to him.

After work I go to Mike's place.

We sip coffee and eat pieces of a cake I have baked. Mike tells me in great detail what a son-of-a-bitch Nelson was last night. My digestion curdles with jealousy. He spends most of our time together telling me what a mean, undependable person Nelson is.

"But you, you ah dependable," Mike tells me.

I do not want to be dependable any more.

Monday morning, I pack only enough fruit, cheese, and cake for me to eat during lunch and coffee breaks. I do not pack anything extra to share with Mike over coffee at his place after work.

All day long I do not call Mike. I reach for the telephone involuntarily, out of habit, but decide not to call him. I have sinking feelings. Shortness of breath. Fear. I think of his trim body cuddled in my arms, of his buns pressed into my groin. I feel dizzy and think I am going to pass out.

After work I distract myself with a walk around Lake Hollywood. The Witch's Cap on the underbrush reminds me of Mike's grip on my emotions. Its deadly yellow tendrils smother the life out of the bushes it gradually covers. I'm being unfair to Mike. He is more like a honeysuckle.

I can almost feel the moment — 5:40 PM — when Mike knows I am not going to come by. I think that Mike will get together with Hans. Hans will urge Mike to try calling me at home. Instead, Hans will end up calling me.

Vhy hafn't you come by to see Mike?" Hans will ask. And I will tell him I have dropped Mike.

A red setter follows me most of the way around the lake. A lady jogger passes me. I meet three male bicyclists, two of them sexy. They say hello. I turn and watch their buns and leg muscles pumping away.

Restless after my walk, I go to the tubs.

The Tubs.

A smell of wintergreen in the steam room. The shadow kneels in front of me. Sweat and sweet sensations. I do not want to climax yet. I shower and wander down the hallway. In the dimness of one of the tiny rooms I see a body like the statue of David. I come close and he emerges into the light: an unbelievably huge cock. Too large for me. I move on.

Down the hall a black man with a physique like Hercules. I smile and he draws me gently into the room. He turns me so he can watch us in the mirror as he does me.

Another shadow draws me into another room. Room ten. He has a story to tell as he plays with my cock. Years ago, bigger guys used to ambush him on a pathway through a wooded area as he walked home from school. Two of the bigger guys would catch him and hold him on the ground. A third guy would pull down his pants. They took turns playing with his cock till he couldn't hold back any longer. They made him come.

In another room a curly-haired, muscular young man is lying face-down on the bed. He is wearing a basketball shirt with the number six on it and a jock strap. On the shelf beside the bed is a dildo and a fraternity paddle. He looks over his shoulder at me, half-yearning, half-fearful. A lock of hair falls over his forehead appealingly. I go into the room and lock the door. I pick up the paddle. The muscles of his buns tense. He lowers his head and bites the pillow, waiting.

In the locker room, a muscular one-eyed Italian smiles.

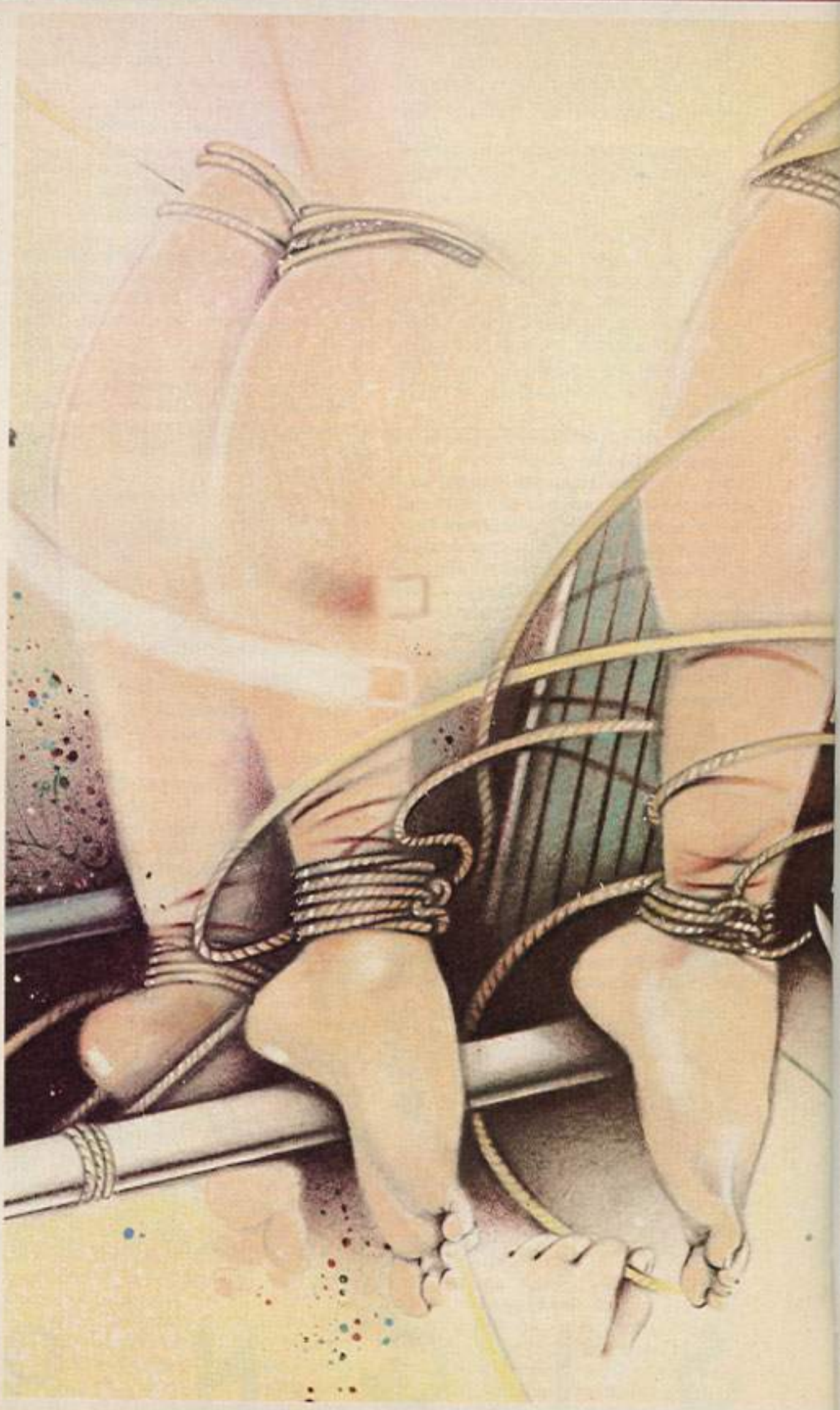
"Everybody's leaving," I say.

"Only the best," he says. "When the best leave, the rest grieve." He winks the good eye and leaves, wearing a military uniform.

Outside. 8:15 PM. Balmy evening. Gibbous moon. Deep red sunset glow. A smell of smoke from the fire in Topanga Canyon.

At home I see Cort, my beer-bellied neighbor, in a tank-top shirt beside his air conditioner. The porch light is on and he is looking at the air conditioner and shaking his head.

"Not large enough to cool this house," he complains.



Illustrated by Dave Calver

I hear Maidie shouting through the kitchen door. Cort and Maidie arguing again. Sweat and arguments.

Two messages on my telephone answering machine. Roxanne called. Roxanne? Must be a wrong number. Hans called, 7 PM.

Hans called! I was right.

Sunday.

I have made it through a week without Mike. I go to the tubs again. I see Mike's car. I park behind it and go inside.

In the dark hallway I see Mike. He is as graceful as a deer. I am reminded of Bambi. I cannot resist this beautiful creature.

I sit on a bench near the Glory-Hole room and stare at Mike in semi-darkness. Mike comes out and sits on the bench. I move over towards him. A start of recognition, as he realizes who I am. He does not move away. We stare at each other in the dimness.

He reaches out. My fingers entwine with his. Fondling. Silence. A whisper.

"Let's go find a woom somewheah," he says.

I resist the urge to laugh, with delight, at his accent. Mike leads me. We go to room ten.

"I didn't mean to hurt you," I say. "I thought you wanted me out of your life so you and Nelson could be together."

Mike holds me, He trembles. Swallows a sob. I had *wanted* to make him cry. He does. Tears make soft noises falling on the sheet. I am glad. Gentle kisses.

Finally he speaks, trembling uncontrollably. "I *want* you to *huht* me," he says. "Dat why I make you mad!"

I had never understood.

At Mike's place, I guide him, my hand roughly on his shoulder, down the hallway to his bedroom. His knees are weak. He can hardly walk. He hands me lengths of cord that had been hidden in the closet, narrow cord that will cut into his wrists and ankles.

I tie him spread-eagled on the bed and prop his buttocks up on pillows, emphasizing their muscular curves. I remove my belt and swing it in the air.

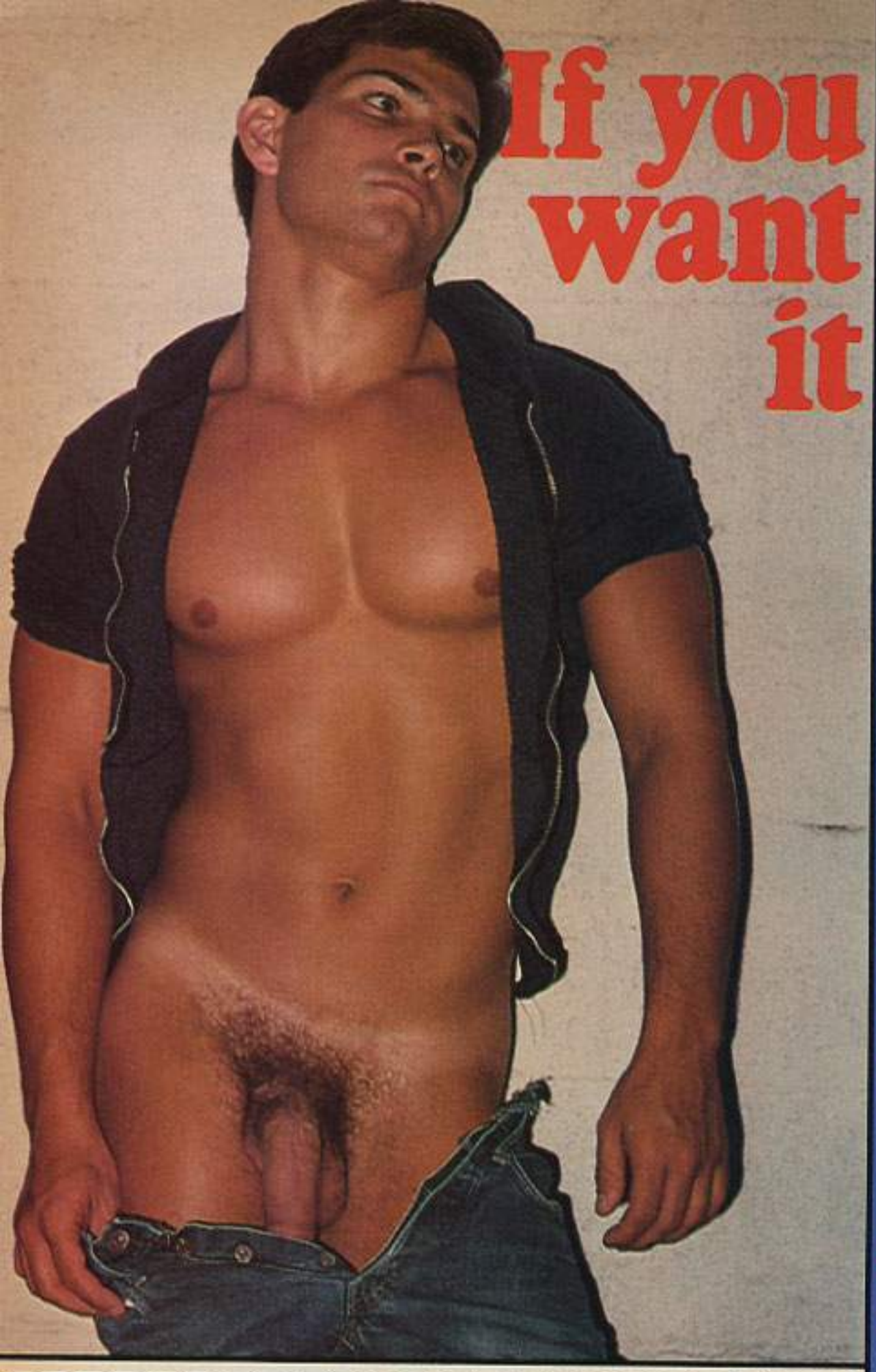
At the first light touch of the belt, his body starts violently.

Tuesday.

Hans calls me.

"Mike has been behafing very strange. He did not see Nelson for two days. Instead he kept me avake half the night telling me what a son-of-a-bitch *you* are. Vhat haf you done to him?"

"The right thing at last," I say. ■



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Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I hereby represent that I am over 18 years of age.

Signature _____ Date _____

NUMBERS

FROM THE MEN WHO BRING YOU BLUEBOY

DIAMONDS IN THE SUNSHINE

(Continued from page 64)

the time). Tall, with dark brown hair framing a WASP classic face, he was wearing tight faded jeans which accentuated a terrific crotch, a collarless shirt and a dark velvet jacket. He immediately ordered a slab of carrot cake and chocolate milk, downed that, ordered German chocolate and more milk and then a hamburger. We talked and he mentioned he was from Oklahoma and came into Hollywood every couple of months "to do my business." He'd, in fact, just come from doing some and making a stop at the bank afterwards.

He never really said what his business was but when I asked him outright he just smiled and said "What kind of question is that?" He already knew I had the answer. The talk was aimless, me drinking red wine while he downed his chocolate milk. He eventually left leaving the waitress a $3.06 tip. When I left, he was waiting outside, lounging against the brick wall of the parking lot. I got in my car and waved at him and pulled away. I couldn't figure out if he wanted me as a paying customer or as a friend. It depressed me all the way home and I couldn't shake the image of his face for the rest of the day.

Sexual identity in Hollywood is a makeshift reality at best. One Saturday night I was wending across the dance floor of Studio One, *the* hot dance palace, when an extraordinarily goodlooking guy grabbed me and asked me to dance. We boogied for two hours, drenching ourselves with mutual sweat. During a beer break he launched into his story; how he was straight and especially liked older women in their thirties. "Then what am I doing here?" he finished. I couldn't tell him. Afterwards we stood up on the corner talking but we couldn't come up with a satisfactory answer. We split, heading in separate directions to our cars and again I was in the middle of a situation I couldn't fathom. He said he was on his way to a chicken bar called Odessey and I went home, depressed again by the seemingly constant state of non-identity afflicting outwardly superb-looking people. I'm beginning to realize that it's a state of affair I had better get used to.

One of the first people I got involved with was a Drug Crazed Hollywood Youth, my nickname for him. 22, he lived with an older woman in Santa Monica along with several other gay guys and spent most of his time wired for sound. Taller than I am, about 6'1", he had the kind of face you usually see in high school yearbooks, a look he tried to butch up with a moustache. Intensely aware of his sexually and his 10" cock, he complicated his life with it rather than simply enjoying it. He resented being thought of only as a sex object yet, conversely, was unable to allow himself to be accepted as a person, which I tried to do. It was the Hollywood frame of mind at its most self-destructive.

He was my guide the first few weeks here, showing me the bars and discos, helping me find the right levis and the right boots as I'd decided to give the Hollywood Look a try. Off came the New York beard and eventually the moustache too. Oddly enough, I was sexually hottest with just the moustache, I guess because every other guy has one and it's a classification point. I hadn't seen my face in two years and it was interesting to meet new people without the almost-disguise it had become. The lack of it gave me a sense of independence, of freedom from playing a game. It also increased my own responsibility in meeting people. DCHY and I split after a party at which he let himself be picked up by somebody else. The next morning he showed up at my place and I had his things packed and waiting by the door. Feeling angry and disappointed, I came across like Susan Hayward as I threw a thumb over my shoulder at the paper bags and told him to "take your shit and get out." He did.

Hollywood is a small town, though, and not big enough for vendettas. When I see him now I say hello and keep going. The very sexuality he purported to dislike had been too strong to overcome and it cost him a friend. You have to have rules in Hollywood as anywhere and he'd broken a cardinal one. Warning: DCHY make pretty flimsy baskets for emotional eggs.

Since L.A.-land is such a small town yet packed with a constantly shifting parade of beauties, most lovers have arrangements. It's an interesting aspect of sexual etiquette and it seems to work. At the 8709 Baths you often learn the people you're making it with are lovers, held together by a combination of affection, house payments and jointly-owned color TVs and tested by a stream of passing strangers. One couple I know go all the time, together or separately, neither jealous of the other's activities, just accepting each other's needs and the fact that they've found a solution that pleases them both. It's a good compromise considering they live in a city too tight to cheat in.

The 8709 is the hottest bath in town and you can meet anyone there from mechanics to movie stars. There's an ambiance about the place that's less frenetic than its New York counterparts, filled with hot men ready for action. Walking down the mirrored maze, it's not uncommon to cruise

(Continued on page 74)

Introductory Offer!

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DIAMONDS IN THE SUNSHINE (Continued from page 73)

your own reflection, especially if you've smoked some good dope or dropped a little acid.

Drugs in L.A.-land are big. The teenyboppers, too young to drink, have opted for grass spiked with highly dangerous angel dust but most people still rely on alcohol to get their evenings — and afternoons for that matter — off the ground. Acid is around too and it took California to get me to finally try it. That event took place Oscar night, but after grass, wine and Vanessa Redgrave, I wasn't sure just what buttons were being pushed. I do remember going out later to The Rusty Nail and waking up the next morning, back home, without my underwear. As for inner visions, if I had any I forgot them.

I'd first come to L.A.-land to cover Oscar '77 the previous year and had been bitten by the West Coast bug then. Living chicly at the Chateau Marmont and swimming on Oscar afternoon with several of the foreign nominees helped make up my mind that this town would be worth taking a chance on. People talk about New York energy and while that's valid, there's also a lot of energy out here. The people in charge are easier to get to even if getting a definite answer may take longer. Some Californians feel it's necessary to be laid back about business. Casual friends, you'll find, are anxious to help you through the daze of days you initially spend walking through Hollywood and picking up on it. Then it hits you, a rush that comes from all sides, and you know you've made the right choice.

Once out here, L.A.-land gives you a sweeping choice of ways to live from Hollywood Classic, old mansions from the Golden Days, to Fire Island Provincial beach houses at Santa Monica with the Pacific pounding just a few feet away. You can always go Highrise Modern but I thought that was too much like New York and opted for a small apartment compound in West Hollywood, moving in with a New York friend who'd also just made the move out. He was also cued up to taste the new lifestyle, fueled with ambition to make it work.

I remember the excitement of the first week, finding the apartment and then renting furniture for it. You can rent anything in Hollywood right down to a cigarette burning in the ashtray. We rented a Chevette and the day the furniture arrived felt like winners on *The Joker Is Wild*, suddenly surrounded by an apartment full of new furniture and a new car parked outside. All of it on credit but then that's standard procedure out here. In restaurants, credit cards flash about 60% of the time as if payment for the whole Hollywood Dream Machine can be stalled indefinitely.

And other things that flash are the diamonds. I've never seen as many men sporting diamond rings as in Hollywood. Whether gifts from lovers or from themselves, they wear them with a sense of M-G-M pride, status symbols that almost everyone can afford. They may be out of work and on relief but they've got them and wear them around the swimming pool and the bars, twinkling proof of at least a one-time successful ride on the Hollywood merry-go-round.

I dug out a diamond bracelet a lover had once given me and wear it often. It's twinkling now, in the sunshine, as I lie here letting the sun drench my body and clear my head. This afternoon I'm taking my California driving test and the face they'll be photographing will be a smiling one. Tonight I'm giving my first Hollywood party complete with several old movie stars, a plastic surgeon nicknamed "the bagman" because of his skill with eyes, a few other writers, successful and un, my agent, and the man who used to do Vera Hruba Ralston's hair at Republic. I'm wearing white and it's gonna be terrific. ■

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Address ____
City ____ State ____ Zip ____
Signature x ____
Sign your name as it appears on credit card
☐ BankAmericard ☐ Master Charge
Interbank No. ____
Exp. Date ____
B25

METRIC TOOLS(Continued from page 34)

But metric has caught on throughout the rest of the world, with the exception of such nations as Yemen, Liberia, Burma and Brunei (that's just a few kilometers to the northwest of Borneo). The European Common Market decreed that after April 21, 1978, all imports must be labeled in metric dimensions. So the English officially adopted the metric system in 1965 as they prepared to join the Common Market. Australia followed suit in 1970, and Canada in 1971. Thus America's acceptance and acclimation to the metric system will be significant to global unity.

Instametric Guide

In order that you can get acquainted with the metric system without a deluge of facts and figures, the information below provides the simple facts you'll need to learn for everyday situations. For a more thorough examination of metrication, visit the library or a bookstore for a number of sources that *can* deluge you with facts and figures.

LENGTH – Basic Unit: meter (m)

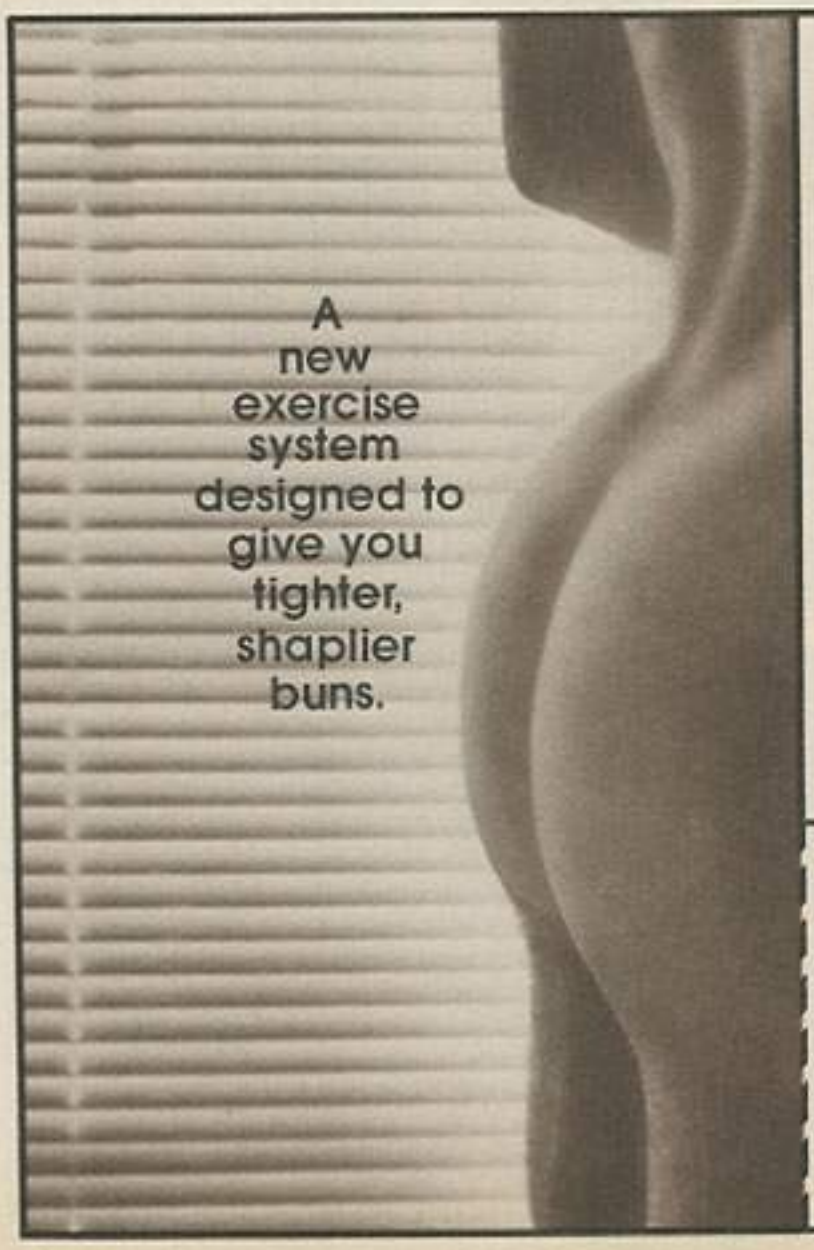
One *meter* is 39.37 inches or slightly longer than a yard. Three other units are commonly used with the meter.

1. The *kilometer* (km) is used in place of miles for long distances.
   1000 meters = 1 km = about 5/8 mile
2. The *centimeter* (cm) which is 1/100 of a meter is about the width of your little fingernail and replaces the inch and the foot in our present system. One inch contains 2.54 centimeters.
3. The *millimeter* (mm) is 1/1000 of a meter. There are 25.4 millimeters in an inch. *(Continued on page 76)*

QUICKIE CONVERSION TABLES
for fast and approximate conversions

from METRIC

Symbol	When you know:	Multiply by:	To find:
mm	millimeters	0.04	inches
cm	centimeters	0.4	inches
m	meters	3.3	feet
m	meters	1.1	yards
km	kilometers	0.6	miles
g	grams	0.035	ounces
kg	kilograms	2.2	pounds
t	tonnes (1000 kg.)	1.1	tons
ml	milliliters	0.03	fluid ounces
l	liters	2.1	pints
l	liters	1.06	quarts
l	liters	0.26	gallons



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Now you can tighten up where it counts . . . and look as good from behind as you do from the front. Studies have shown that men react positively to **both** an attractive face and a firm ass . . . the cared-for body that really fits today's revealing fashions.

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Please send me _____ Contourex® Systems complete with the Contourex® exerciser and the illustrated Instruction Booklet. I understand that if I do not begin to develop tighter, shaplier buns in just 10 days, I can return my Contourex® Systemand receive my money back. I enclose $19.90 for each System plus $1.00 each for postage and handling.

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

B25

(Continued from page 75)

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Name _____

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Signature _____

(This signature certifies I am over 18.)

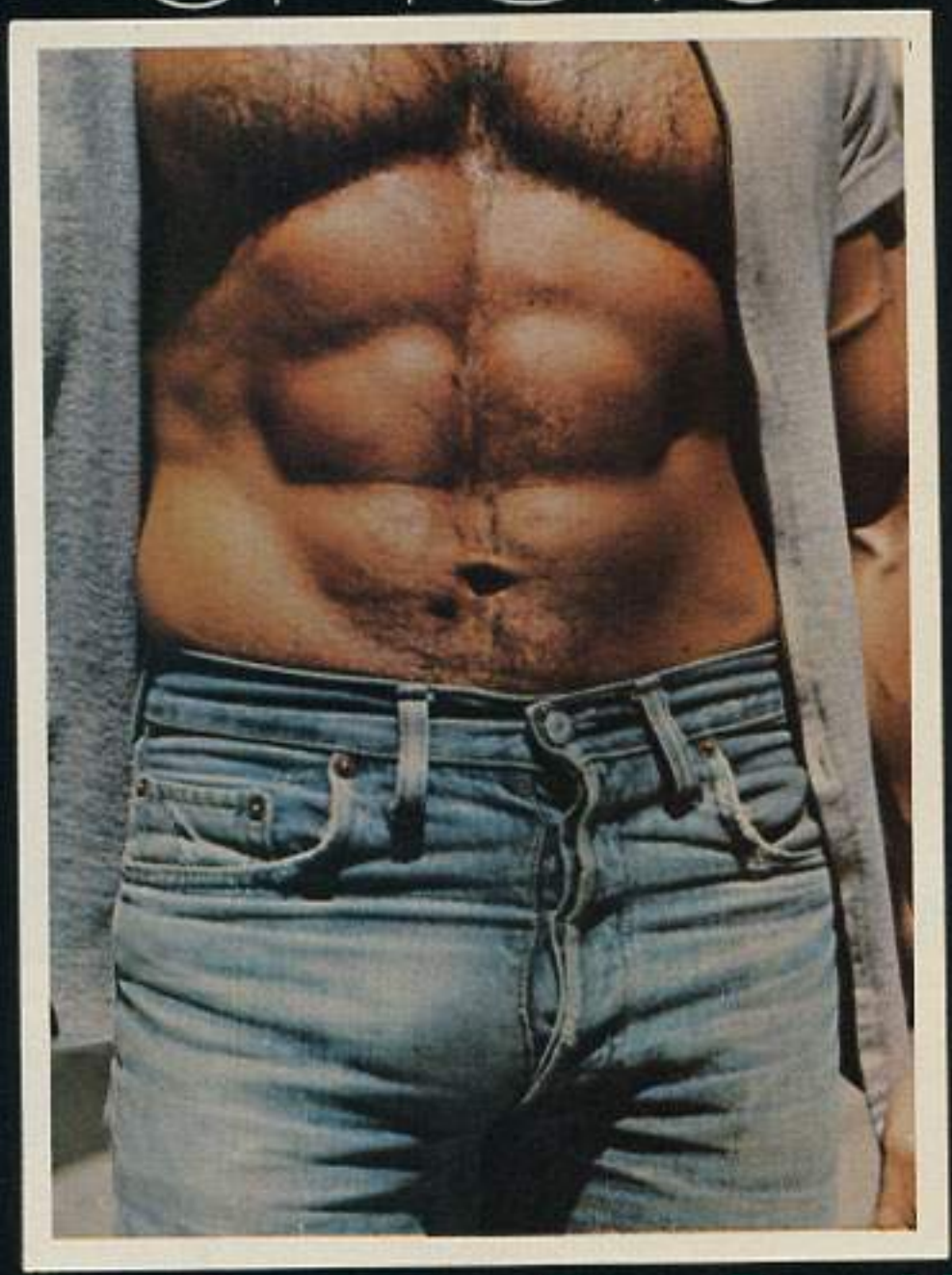
to METRIC			
Symbol	When you know:	Multiply by:	To find:
in.	inches	2.54	centimeters
ft.	feet	30.00	centimeters
yd.	yards	0.90	meters
mi.	miles	1.60	kilometers
oz.	ounces	28.00	grams
lb.	pound	0.45	kilograms
	tons	0.9	tonnes
tsp.	teaspoons	5	milliliters
Tbsp.	tablespoons	15	milliliters
fl. oz.	fluid ounces	30	milliliters
c.	cups	.24	liters
pt.	pints	.47	liters
qt.	quarts	.95	liters
gal.	gallons	3.8	liters

BODY SIZES

Weights		Heights	
lbs.	kilograms*	ft. inches	meters or centimeters*
25	11	1'	30
50	23	2'	61
60	27	3'	91
70	32	4'	1.22 or 122
80	36	5'	1.52 152
90	41	5'1"	1.55 155
100	45	5'2"	1.57 157
105	47	5'3"	1.60 160
110	50	5'4"	1.63 163
115	51	5'5"	1.65 165
120	54	5'6"	1.68 168
125	56	5'7"	1.70 170
130	59	5'8"	1.73 173
135	61	5'9"	1.75 175
140	63	5'10"	1.78 178
145	65	5'11"	1.80 180
150	68	6'	1.83 183
155	70	6'1"	1.85 185
160	72	6'2"	1.88 188
165	74	6'3"	1.91 191
170	77	6'4"	1.93 193
175	79	6'5"	1.96 196
180	81	6'6"	1.98 198
185	83	6'7"	2.01 201
190	86	6'8"	2.03 203
195	88	6'9"	2.06 206
200	90	6'10"	2.08 208
210	95	6'11"	2.11 211
220	99	7'	2.13 213
230	104		
240	108		
250	113		
300	135		

*rounded to nearest whole number

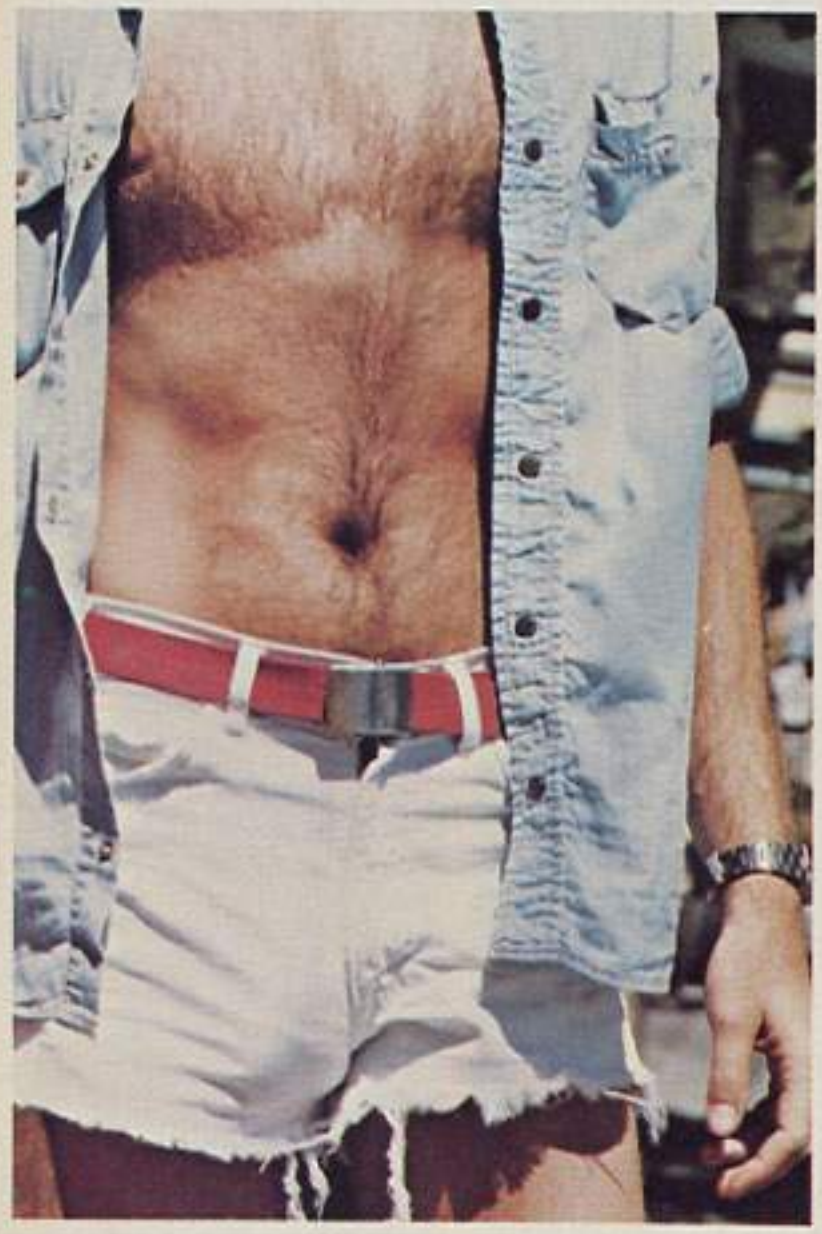
HOT SHOTS

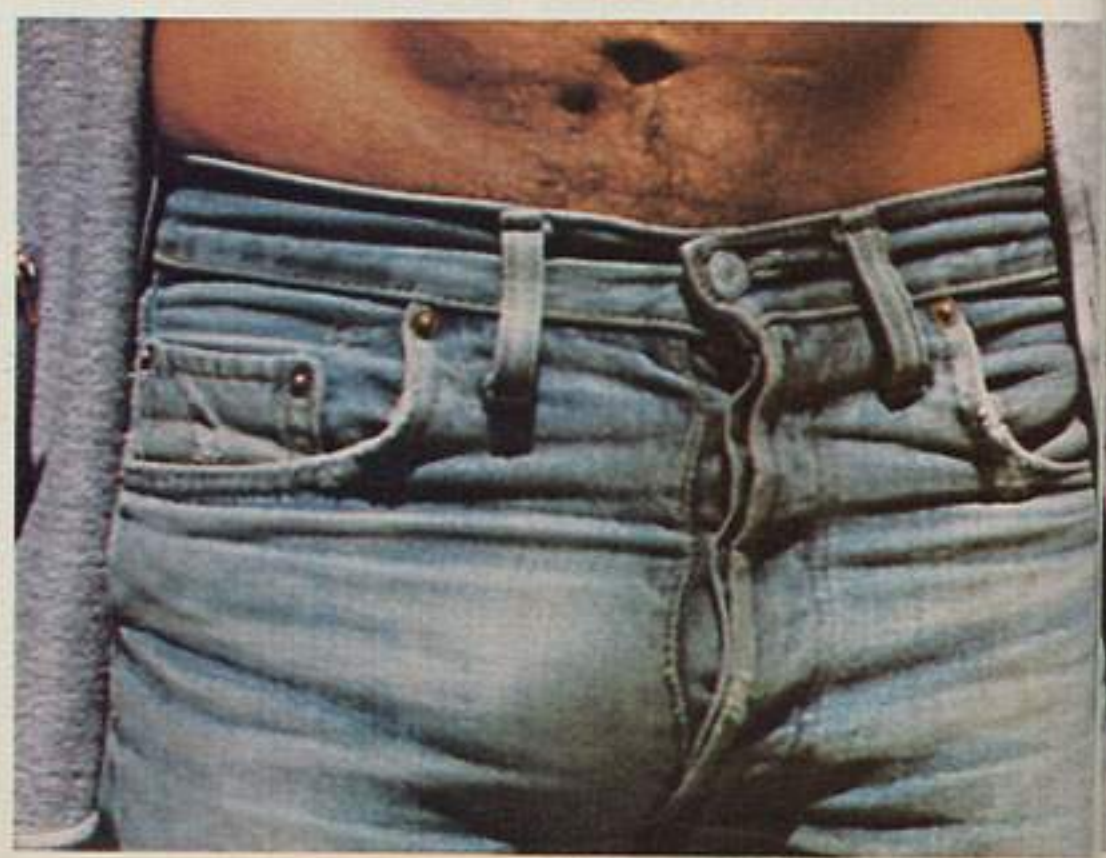


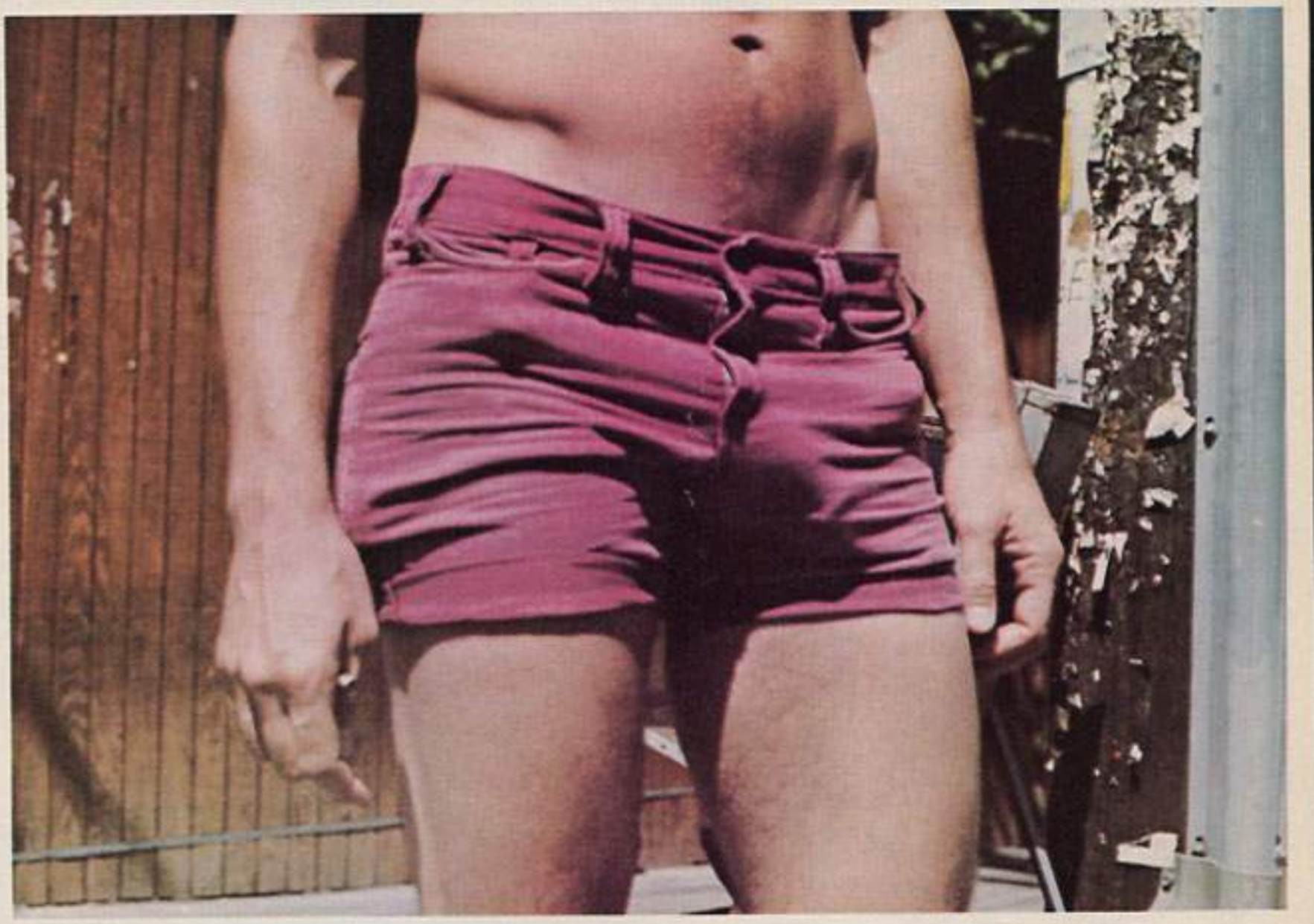
CROTCH SHOTS

SECTION PHOTOGRAPHED BY BRUCE WERNER

HOT SHOTS







HOLIDAYS

N-Large The scientifically proven perfected penis process

After many years of research in this most sensitive field a scientifically proven method finally becomes reality.

Our researchers are confident that this method is not only possible...but *it is* 100% safe.

This new method will increase the size of the penis not only in its erect state, but even in its flaccid position.

There has never been, until now, anyone willing and able to undertake a serious investigation into increasing the size of the penis. The medical profession has always scoffed at both the desirability and possibility of achieving this.

The desirability is surely the choice of the individual, while the possibility is obvious, when one thinks about it.

An erection is produced by erotic stimulation, transmitted from the brain via the appropriate nerves, causing the penis to be liberally charged with blood, which causes it to expand and stiffen.

Basically speaking, to enlarge the erection, it is necessary to increase the blood flow and to stretch the erectile tissues of the penis to accommodate the extra blood.

These are two most important problems successfully solved.

THE FACTS ABOUT THE METHOD

The interest in the possibility of increasing penile dimensions caused to investigate such alleged methods as were already in existence. To this end we were able to call on the assistance of a number of men who have helped us in other experiments.

Our initial research showed that the fantastic claims made by many of these methods were backed by no concrete evidence whatsoever and experiments proved them virtually useless. However, two methods did succeed in producing some improvements.

The improvements gained were slight but permanent and also resulted in a much firmer erection. The Vacuum Developer produced considerable improvement, but only of a temporary nature. Various models of these were tested. We next used these two methods in conjuction with each other and achieved considerable success.

Further research enabled us to incorporate additional improvements in order to combine them to the best possible advantage. The result was an entirely new method of penile development. We then tested our method with 15 men of varying age groups. The following results are exactly as stated in his report.

Of the 15 who took part, 3 were aged 21, 23 and 24 respectively; 4 were between 28 and 35; 5 were between 40 and 45 and 2 were 51 and 54 respectively. The 21 and 23 year olds added up to 1¼ " in length and ¾ " in girth. The 24 year old added 1 " in length and just over 1 " in girth. The 28s to 35s between ¾ " to 1 " in length and between ½ " and ¾ " in girth. The 40s to 45s were within the same limits, though one added 1½ " to length and an inch to girth. The 51 year old added ¾ " to length and an inch to girth, and the 54 year old put on ¾ " in length and just over 1¼ " in girth.

A latecomer to the tests was a man in his early 60s, whose measurements were already 6½ " in length and 5 " in girth, yet produced the surprising results of 1.3 " in length and 0.7 " in girth by the time all had completed the course, though he carried it out for one month less than the rest."

These results are even more amazing than at first appears. First, there was not a single failure in any age group. Secondly, the increases both in length and circumference are quite remarkable when one considers them in perspective. To appreciate what an increase in girth of ¾ " means, take a tape measure and curl the end over to make a circle of 4¾ " (roughly average penis circumference) then move it out to 5½ ". The difference in length can be shown by holding a ruler against the length of your own erect penis and imagining another 1 " added.

SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE METHOD

Q. Why should a man wish to increase the size of his penis, when all the books say that size doesn't matter?

A. It is a fact that the size of a man's penis does not physically affect his sexual performance or his ability to give satisfaction to his partner. However, the size of a man's penis is of vital importance to him and, that no amount of assurance will convince the underdeveloped man that he can be the sexual equal of his more well endowed neighbor. Neither is it possible to convince the average man that a larger penis will not necessarily afford him more sexual enjoyment. The penis is the symbol of man's masculinity and any fears as to its dimensions being inadequate can be extremely damaging to his sexual confidence. On the other hand, the man who is well endowed in this respect has every confidence in his lovemaking.

Q. How does the method work?

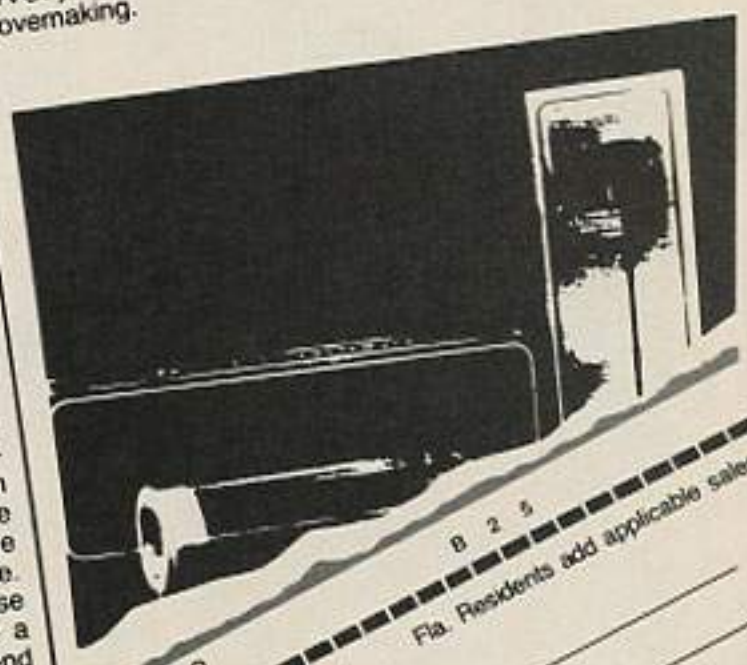
A. Expressed as briefly as possible, the rationale of the Method lies in stimulating the circulation to increase the supply of blood to the genital region; in promoting the elasticity and expansile properties of the vascular tissue of shaft and glans; and in enabling the subject to achieve positive control of normally involuntary muscle action.

Q. Is the Method suitable for me?

A. Yes, if you are in a reasonable state of health and wish to increase your penis dimensions. No, if you suffer from heart trouble or any condition whereby you cannot safely indulge in moderate exercise.

Q. What is the cost of the Method?

A. The total price is $39.95, includes postage and handling. Available only thru the mail.



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Please send me the complete N-Large Method. I have enclosed $39.95 which includes postage and handling. B 2 5

Fla. Residents add applicable sales tax.

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Address _____

Signature _____ *I am over 18 years of age*

Fatima reveals that several gay harems have at least one or two American, European or Egyptian youths, induced by lavish salaries, generous gifts, occasional trips abroad and all the sex they can handle. They're permitted to cavort with each other, unlike members of traditional harems, and they have far more independence and mobility.

"One of my best girlfriends," continues the diminutive princess, "is married to a very important government official's son, of about 40. He was educated in England and is very modern, but he does nothing for a living — his father provides for all his sons and daughters, and the sons are free to do what they want.

"When he is at home, he has four boys of 18 to 25 who live with him. They are supposed to be his kitchen staff, but none of them cooks well at all; I don't cook, because I am royalty, but I am better at it than they! His wife knows the truth (he has only one wife), but she does not complain, because she is quite emancipated for an Arab woman and she can come and go to Lebanon and Kuwait as she wishes, with her mother along as chaperone.

"Her husband chose two of the boys — whom I saw once at her house — from Italy. He went to the South and made them an offer to return with him to Riyadh and act as servants and...lovers. They are paid much more than they could ever get in Italy or even in Germany or America, and they send part of their earnings to their families each month.

"But understand, they are not slaves. They are not even servants, for they only *pretend* to work, although I do not know what they do with their extra time when the man is abroad."

What about slaves; are they ever sexually abused by their masters?

Jaffar is a middle-aged man who acts as personal groom to a number of Kuwaiti noblemen studying in Los Angeles. All are from the powerful house of Sabah, which has ruled the tiny oil state during this century. Jaffar himself comes from a minor offshoot of the Al-Sabahs and owns three slaves in his Kuwait City home, which is as sumptuous as that of any of his charges. He explains:

"Slaves in our country are usually dark-skinned and often come from East Africa. Unlike your black American slaves, they were not kidnapped and forcibly sold into slavery; they willingly indenture themselves for a number of years, or if they are very poor, for life. Parents will sell excess children who would otherwise die of starvation and disease. Although it sounds horrible to say there are still slaves in our part of the world, there are many rules and laws for treating them properly.

"The Koran has many edicts on the treatment of slaves, and one is that women and boys must not be submitted to sexual assault, if they are unwilling. In any case, the Koran looks down on becoming intimate with slaves, especially females, because of the status of the children produced from such intimacy. But many men with male slaves regularly have sex with them, as a supplement to their wives.

"You see, Kuwaiti men do not have sex with their wives as often as American men. Here, there is an unbelievable emphasis on sex that simply doesn't exist there. It would be forbidden by the religious atmosphere and our good taste. The woman is considered a breeder, a mother to children and a mistress of the household who either runs the house or oversees the servants. Sex with women is not taken for granted, and the socializing of the genders is limited. Most men spend evenings with other men, in their homes or at cafes and other meeting places, and they talk, play non-gambling cards (Moslems are forbidden alcohol, most smoking and gambling) and perhaps trik-trak (backgammon).

"The opportunities for sex with a male friend are much greater than with a wife or woman, despite the harem."

"Moslem culture and history glorifies the male-male bond ... Interestingly enough, American 'buddy films' are far more popular in the Mid East than are conventional heterosexual love stories."

In the desert, where male bedouins may strike out in search of food or shelter, often staying away as long as several months, homosexuality is sometimes engaged in through necessity. Caravans of merchant goods or hunting parties in search of desert fowls and small animals are exclusively comprised of men; when most Arabs travel, whether it is from oasis to oasis or from Riyadh to Beirut or London, they leave their women at home.

"An Arab man is not conditioned to expect to have sex every day," smiles Jaffar. "In America, your advertisements and so much in your daily lives puts sex into your mind constantly. Just seeing the women in their tight or low-cut clothes makes most men sexual. But in the Moslem Middle East, all you see are other men. If one sees a woman, she is either in purdah (covered with veils or an emcompassing black shroud) or with child. So there is not the same sexual atmosphere.

"Even with men and youths, most of us wear traditional robes in our countries, not the form-fitting slacks and so-called body shirts. Our people are exceedingly modest, and to reveal any portion of one's body through suggestive clothing is in very bad taste."

Despite the seeming asexuality of that culture, there is a strong undercurrent of male camaraderie that frequently erupts with sexual tension. While speaking, Arabs stand much closer to each other (within the same sex, that is). It is common to feel a man's breath on you while you are talking — this is one reason oil-wealthy Arabs are among the biggest purchasers of French perfumes and colognes. Bodily contact and touching is extremely frequent, and when two men accidentally brush up against each other — even their private parts — they do not mutter "sorry" and turn away.

Moslem culture and history glorifies the male-male bond, and the average man has several very close buddies. Interestingly enough, American "buddy films" are far more popular in the Mid East than are conventional heterosexual love stores. For example, *Love Story* bombed in Saudi Arabia, but *California Split*, with George Segal and Elliot Gould, was a huge hit, despite its gambling theme). And dating as we know it is unheard of, all contact between the sexes being strictly forbidden after infancy and before the actual marriage ceremony.

"Although most adult males do not have sex with each other," offers Ahmed who, as previously noted, *is* gay, "their feelings for each other are often a form of sublimated sexuality. At any rate, many boys

(Continued from page 81)

do have sex together, because as you probably know, there is no dating. There is no way a young man can have sex with a female, for society is very strict and there are few prostitutes, and usually their services are greatly in demand — in the big cities — from wealthy men and foreigners who have the money to meet their high prices.

"I have had sex with well over 100 friends, acquaintances and schoomates — all schooling separates the genders — even before I was in my 20s. I had a few lovers whom I regularly saw, but there were also the many boys who were not homosexual when they grew up, but wanted a release for their sexuality, which is more dominant among the young who indulge in Western culture as often as they can.

"I never felt guilty about this, and neither did the majority of the males I had sex with. We would masturbate together or stroke each other, since touching each other's bodies is not as shameful as it seems to be here, and we would, after a while, sometimes have oral and anal sex as well. There is no need for shame, I believe, unless the boy or man is taken advantage of. I have, as you say, been both screwed and I have screwed.

"Most of my old friends know I am homosexual, but they are still my friends. I have only one friend who disapproves and won't see me, and he is the son of a Saudi woman who married a Canadian businessman who now lives in Qatar. For the rest, there is no question of rejecting me, and although I do not discuss my sexual life with them, I never feel uncomfortable or as though I should hide something. Sex in general is not discussed, and even as youths, we would have sex, do it some more, then stop. There was never much talking about it; however, there was bound to be more intimacy between two frequent lovers."

Has Ahmed had sex with any American males, and how does he sport his gayness in this country?

"Only with one do I have sex here," he laughs. "One of my professors' teaching aides. I went in to discuss a test with my professor, but he was not there. The aide was there, and after we finish talking, he asks me about sex at home (in Arabia, that is). One thing leads to the other, and we go to his place and try every position. It is my first non-Arab. But afterwards, he smokes a cigarette and turns away. When I want to discuss with him what we have done and how much I like it, he becomes very cold and makes an excuse to go to the bathroom.

"So I think, if this is how they all are, then I remain only friends with them. For sex, I stick now with other Arabs. We don't talk as much as you do about sex, but we do it and when it is over we are still friends." ■

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PERRY KING
(Continued from page 68)

rectors too; the kind of director I want to be requires someone to have existed, functioned, lived a lot.

"The only notable exception I know of is the director of the new movie, *A Different Story*, Paul Aaron, and he's a very odd man in that he's an old soul; he seems to have lived through it all before. He has the knowledge and wisdom of a hundred-year-old. Most people think he's older than he really is; not because he looks older, but because he has this serene inner ... sadness."

King's enthusiasm for Aaron carries over to the film. "*A Different Story* surprises me so much because it was the best experience I ever had; I've never enjoyed a set so much. I'm so surprised that I really love the result that, for the first time, I want to work for the film. Usually, when something's finished, I lose interest. But I just love this film; I'm going to try to do a lot of work for it because I love it so."

In the film, King plays a gay man. Earlier in the interview, he mentions with obvious pride that his wife is studying law and that his seven-year-old daughter has learned to speak French. Yet undoubtedly his biggest audience comes from gay men, men who are interested in him not because he can act, but because he is such a physical presence. "How," I ask, "does that feel?"

He answers as if he has given it some thought. "I feel very specifically about it. I feel like I love to do what I do and to do what I do requires that people want to watch me — because an actor is a weird kind of performing artist. Unlike a writer or a painter, an actor has to have an audience, be it a camera or people. But what that means is that people have to want to see you. And if people want to watch me, like to watch me, that's wonderful. I don't really care why, because I know that I do it not because the people are watching, but because it's a totally selfish thing. I love it so that I leave their reasons for watching me entirely up to them. That's their business."

When asked if, then, he sees his playing a gay or the idea of the film itself — of a gay man and a gay woman falling in love with each other — as exploitive or trendy, his answer is even more immediate.

"No, the film is not an exploitive film. Nor is it, and it really isn't, about homosexuality. It's about a larger thing which *includes* homosexuality. What it's really about is being true to yourself, about not being so foolish as to allow your life to be dictated by society's policies of what things should be. It sounds like a joke, but it's actually a very old fashioned movie, although it certainly doesn't sound like one."

And even though he already is so closely identified with a gay audience, he is not concerned about being typecast as a gay actor.

"You see, everything you do, if it's successful, if it works, if people believe you in it, stereotypes you. I mean, that's a constant in acting. The first thing I did was *Joel Delaney*. I was a psychotic killer — and I could have made a career out of being a psychotic killer. I played *Captains And Kings* and then got offered all kinds of Kennedy types. In *Wild Party*, I played a '20s movie star and got offered lots of cheesecakey parts. So everything you do, if it works well, really stereotypes you, but I just continue to do the things I do.

Undoubtedly, his biggest audience comes from gay men, men who are interested in him not because he can act, but because he is such a physical presence.

"I think the big problem is whether most of the gay audience will really understand that it's an affirmation not only of what they feel and of their choice, but an affirmation of everyone' choice. There will be in their ranks, I'm sure, some people who will insist on misreading it as some kind of attack on gays ..."

He stops for a minute. "You know, as much as possible we're trying to avoid this issue, not because we're scared of it, but so that people won't approach this film as some kind of statement on gays — because it's not, it really is not. It's a simple film, a love story, and that's more important than a movie about gays because it's not really about that.

And although the film will be viewed with varying degrees of disappointment and disbelief by substantial portions of the gay audience, probably the most it can be accused of is a failure to honestly explore the problems of a marriage of two bi-sexuals and of a reluctance to be anything more than an old-fashioned, Hollywood love story. But still, just because he feels the movie is not really about homosexuality, that does not stop King from talking about Anita Bryant.

After expressing sympathy with the people in Miami and elsewhere who have lost their jobs, he calls her "one of the last blow torches. She's helped the gay cause, in fact, more than anyone else has in years. Obviously, for the individuals involved, it's terribly tough, but for the movement of freedom of the right to choose, it's the best thing that could happen.

"I mean, literally, it's so good that you would think a small underground group of gays would have invented her. It's the best thing that could have happened, to get that much attention focused on the fact that these people are discriminated against for something that has no connection at all with the rest of their lives.

"I just think they should get a clip of her on television saying — what did she say the other day? Just an astounding statement. She said, well, if we allow this to happen, then, of course, logically, the next thing to happen would be that people who want to be with animals would have to be allowed to be with animals and then people who like to screw dead people ... on television, on national television she said this, with all seriousness, absolutely equating the whole thing — no difference, necrophiliacs and homosexuals all in the same line and that was so mind-boggling."

By now the afternoon and conversation begin to wind down. I ask him for a quick summary of everything that I don't know about him.

"I happen to be an actor who lives in California, who fiddles around and does things and acts for a living. I really have very little to do with California or Los Angeles because I do not really live here by choice and just hate the business side of it.

"The time I was really thrilled about seeing someone," King remembers, "was Fred Astaire in Beverly Hills. To me, he's one of the great geniuses of our time, a genius not just in the way he moves his feet, but for his real talent, his wonderful imagination and, at the same time, his suave. But, anyway, I saw him in Beverly Hills and the most extraordinary thing was that he was almost doing an imitation of himself, it seemed, because we all know him so well. You know, the way he walks with his hands in his pockets and his feet straight ahead. Well, then he just seemed to dance off the curb, across the street. And I really wanted to tap on up to him, you know."

Perry King smiles, puts on his glasses and his leather jacket, walks down the stairs and out the door, revs up his motorcycle, and, whether he wants to or not, looks very much the movie star as he rides off into the setting California sun. ■

Ottawa is businesslike, severely elegant, expectant. Neither decadent nor overly romantic, it sits in the vast Ottawa valley and rules a nation beleaguered by cultural schism. But if you have just a trace of brashness and grace in your approach, you should enjoy this capital city immensely.

BY STEPHEN McELROY

Ottawa in Ontario, like Hemingway's Paris, is a moveable feast. Hemingway meant simply that Paris, when experienced during youth, would always be with you, wherever you may travel, live, and love thereafter. You always have a memory of a portable banquet, a feast of people, places and experiences. For me, it is the same with Ottawa, and quite possibly it would be for you too.

Ottawa is not an old city, nor is it ripe and lush like Paris. If comparisons are in order, Ottawa is much more akin to London: businesslike, severely elegant, expectant; neither decadent, nor forgiving, nor terribly romantic. Ottawa sits in the vast Ottawa valley and it rules Canada.

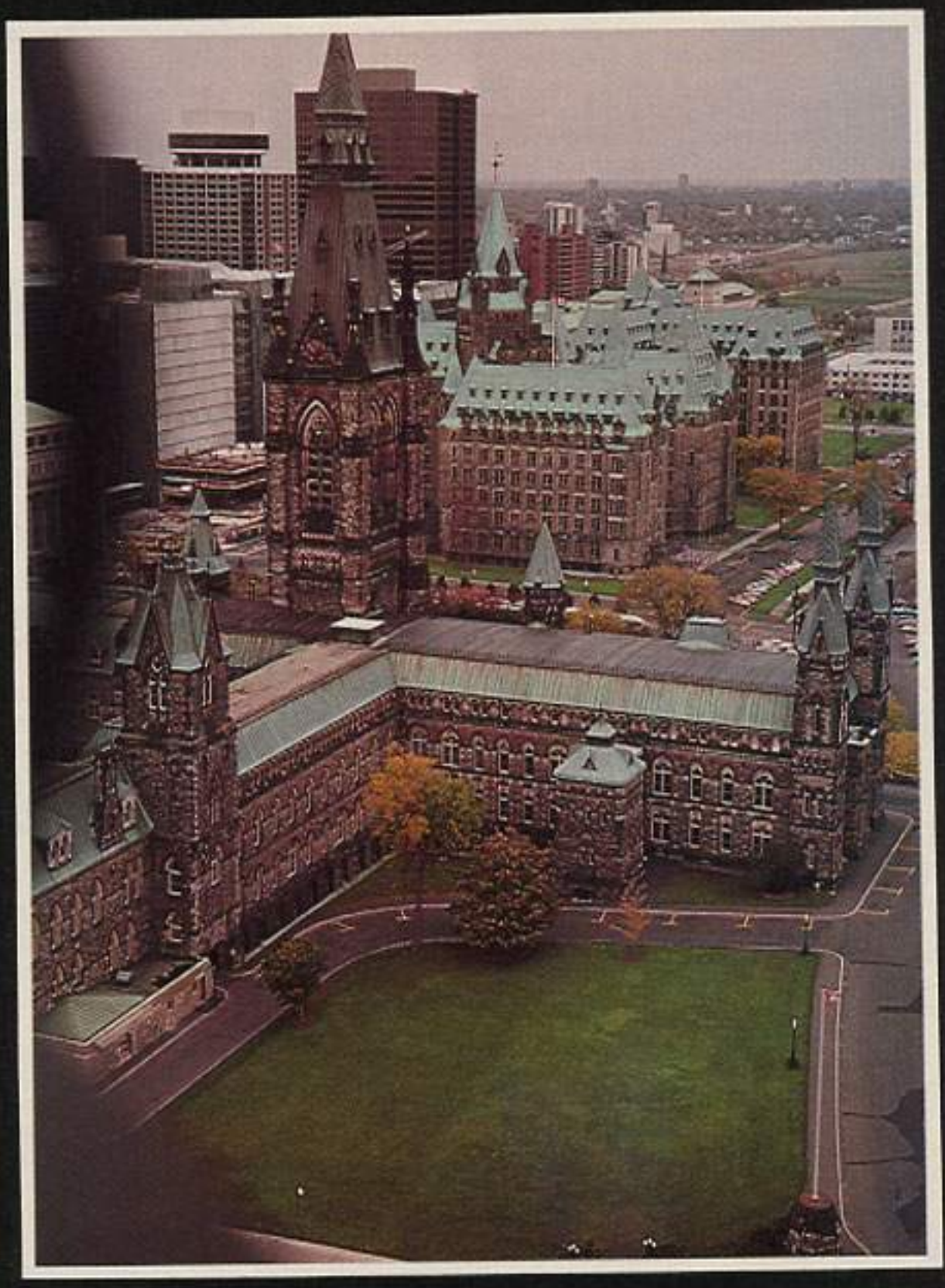
If you're into sophistication, you'll adore Ottawa. So many dark, short handsome types, immaculately groomed, possessing the faintest of French accents, impeccable manners and so much wealth and opulence. (Remember, Ottawa *is* a nation's capital.) Embassies and the British High Commission and sleek black limousines tooling about with diplomatic license plates and barely visible men and women afloat in plush and leather as they are chauffeured on their way to this ball and that salon. And despite the emphasis on form and protocol, there is also an innocence in outlook as well. Perhaps these Ottawans are so up on their manners, their facades, because they feel insecure in the family of world capitals. The city is reminiscent of Washington, D.C. in its early days — a city on the verge of greatness, governing a country on the threshold of immense power.

A fine reserve is my lasting impression of Ottawa and its men; the slightest chill exists in its approach to life and love. But the distant, aloof types are more challenging and, once conquered, more responsive. If you have just a trace of brashness and grace in your approach, you should end up enjoying Ottawa immensely.

It rises along the Ottawa River; all grim with rough sandstone structures, Parliament and a scrubbed, down-to-the-nub cleanness. It is a city of well-kept homes and rows of flats and restaurants owned by the many nationalities who inhabit the city — Swiss, Hungarian, Italian, Lebanese, Japanese. Ottawa offers diversity in shopping with its import shops and its fresh fruit.

(Continued on page 86)

OTTA



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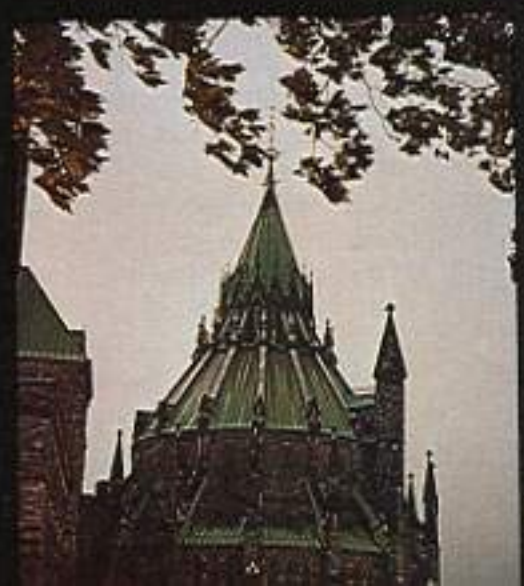

vegetable, and meat markets in the open air. Part of Ottawa's flavor comes from Hull, a town across the river in that other land, Quebec; Hull with its large French-speaking populace and its complement of French separatists. Hull has the best gay discos in the area — Valentino's and Sacs. It has a bit more action for the adventurer than Ottawa proper has.

Ottawa is the spectacular Chateau Laurier at Wellington and McKenzie with its spires and green slate roof; Chateau Laurier, old world elegant hotel whose lobby houses chic shops like Aylea's where you may purchase custom-made jewelry and where you may dine in fashion at The Canadian Grill. Ottawa is also the less incredible Lord Elgin Hotel on Elgin Street which has a very English cocktail lounge — The Library — off its main entrance and a livelier, younger, crowd gathering in its basement pub — The Tavern Downstairs. Both are more or less gay. The Library is simply fine: wood-paneled, heavily draped and carpeted. It has a small bar and an immense room dominated by cozy arrangements of chairs upholstered in velvet and side tables. It has quite a clubby look and is quiet and gentlemanly with quick, quiet, rather frosty cocktail waiters to serve you. If you're into businessmen types dressed in tweeds and woolens and expanses of creamy linen edged with mute-colored silken ties, then you should enjoy The Library. And if your preference is the leviclad, burgeoning-basketed wonder, then The Tavern Downstairs is for you. It is large, well-lit, filled with tables and chairs for close seating and the right setting for all kinds of conversation. The Library is for the tete-a-tete, the soft-toned, though no less passionate rendezvous.

But this piece has gone off on a tangent. Perhaps it is time to backtrack a bit and give you a proper introduction to Ottawa and a brief tour of some of its points of interest before returning to the gayer possibilities of the place.

Ottawa was more or less founded in 1826 by Lt. Col. John By, a Royal Engineer who came to a small settlement that was named Bytown at the juncture of the Ottawa, Rideau, and Gatineau Rivers to work on a canal (ultimately christened the Rideau Canal). The canal was a military route built when tensions between Canada and the U.S. were high. Some years later, Bytown was rechristened Ottawa after an Indian tribe, the Outaouacs or Outaouais. In 1857, Ottawa was designated Canada's capital by Queen Victoria because she hoped its location on the Ontario-Quebec border would resolve Canada's French-English cultural diversity. She was wrong.

Today, Ottawa is a city of some 1800 square miles set in a valley area of forest, farmlands and waters. Its 600,000 plus residents are half French-speaking, half English-speaking, and Ottawa is the model for Canada's somewhat beleaguered effort to bilingualize the nation and at last to end the cultural schism Victoria recognized and sought to ameliorate so many decades ago. Canada is restlessly, often angrily, a land of two heritages; her official languages are English and French, and while you're in Ottawa you best avoid intruding yourself into any discussion of Parti Quebecois, Rene Levesque, and French separatism unless you are well-informed about the whys and wherefores of many Quebecers' desire to leave the Canadian Confederation.

Ottawa encircles the separate villages of Rockcliffe Park, considered Canada's wealthiest, and Vanier. You'll want to tour Rockcliffe Park for the Prime Minister's residence is there (24 Sussex Drive). You'll not be permitted to enter the grounds of the PM's estate, but a slow drive past will suffice and you can cruise the Royal Canadian Mounties guarding the place while you're at it. You will be permitted to enter the grounds of the Governor General's official residence, Government House or Rideau Hall, also in Rockcliffe. There are numerous foreign embassy homes in Rockcliffe that you'll want to gawk at. You'll probably want a car for this tour and for any trips you plan to the discos in Hull or the national parks in the Ottawa area.

Ottawa is a river city and naturally enough the waterways contribute to its character. The aforementioned Rideau Canal, with its locks and its stone construction, makes for some splendid vistas as you wander about the town, and in the winter the canal becomes the world's largest ice skating rink. Ottawa is a green city in its season. The Ottawans seem mad about parks and gardens, and there is a "greenbelt" around the city consisting of a semicircle of 24 miles and 41,000 acres created to prevent the uglification that so often accompanies urban sprawl. There are numerous parks throughout the city. Major's Hill Park and its Nepean Point near Chateau Laurier is the gay pickup section in Ottawa.

There is a beautiful festival in mid-May — a celebration of tulips if you please. The tulips are a perpetual gift of Queen Juliana of Holland to Ottawa for giving the Dutch royal family sanctuary during WWII. The tulip beds are enlarged every year when new bulbs arrive from Holland. During the Festival of Spring, the city is aglow with color in all of its parks and all along the Rideau Canal.

Almost all of what you may want to tour is free. The government buildings are fairly interesting stopping off points, and of special interest is Parliament. Much of Ottawa's architecture is gothic in texture and the Parliament is no exception. Parliament is dominated by the 271-foot Peace Tower with its 53-bell carillon atop the main building in the Parliament complex. If you persevere with the sometimes long lines of tourists, you will be rewarded with fine views of Ottawa as you walk about the enclosures at the top of the Peace Tower. You'll be able to see the enormous clockworks inside and if you're timing is right, you'll get to hear the carillon chime. The octagonal Parliament Library is well worth a brief visit and if you visit Ottawa between mid-June and Labor Day, you won't want to miss the changing of the guard at Parliament staged daily at 10 AM (except when it rains).

You'll also want to visit the National Arts Centre, a $45 million enterprise inaugurated in 1969. It houses an opera house and two smaller theatres, a salon and foyer for festivities and balls, a restaurant, and an outdoor garden with views of Rideau Canal. At the start of July and throughout the remainder of the summer, the National Arts Centre hosts Festival Canada, which features chamber music, opera, jazz, and classic films.

Other points of interest: the National Gallery of Canada with art works dating from the 13th century as well as Picassos, Rembrandts, Van Goghs, and the largest collection of Canadian art in the country; Bytown Museum; the National Library and Public Archives Building; the National Museum of Science and Technology; and the three universities in Ottawa — University of Ottawa, St. Paul University, and Carleton University.

A trip to Bytown and its Byward Market is essential. There are two exotic little shops there that you shouldn't miss: Domus and Giraffe Imports. Domus specializes in kitchenwares — everything from lobster shears to egg pics. Giraffe Imports handles items from Africa — a silhouette of a woman made from the wings of butterflies and a leopard's claw necklace are two examples. You'll enjoy shopping at the Bay (shorthand for Hudson Bay Company, North America's oldest retailer) and Eatons, too.

The Ottawa Transportation Company provides bus service throughout the city, but if you're staying at the Lord Elgin or Chateau Laurier you'll be within easy walking distance of most of the above sites.

Well, you've climbed the Peace Tower, cruised Major's Hill Park, shopped the Bay and Bytown, had happy-hour cocktails at The Library, lunched at the Canadian Grill, walked along the Rideau Canal, toured Rockcliffe and now you're ready for dinner and dancing and whatever the evening may hold. Where do you go?

You may want to drop in on the Gays Of Ottawa group at 378 Elgin. They sponsor a dance every month and will most certainly be able to tell you about any gay happenings in the city. Another indispensable tool for use during a visit to Ottawa is the monthly *What's on in Ottawa*. It is an entertainment and tourism guide, and is free for the asking in most hotels and restaurants.

Some medium-priced ($40.00 per couple including wine with dinner and a cocktail before) restaurants you may want to investigate are Friday's Roast Beef House at 150 Elgin; Al's Steak House at 327 Elgin; The Mill at 555 Ottawa River Parkway (it is actually a restored mill with views of the river and Quebec in the distance, and specializes in roast beef); and La Ferme Colombia at 376 St. Joseph Boulevard in Hull — its speciality is French cuisine.

You'll find a Club Baths in Ottawa at 1069 Wellington. Only cubicles and a steam room, but no orgy room (if that be of prime importance to you). It is situated across the street from the police station but, as gays are legal throughout Canada, you've nothing to fear.

The Library and The Tavern Downstairs have already been touched upon, except to add that there is no dancing in either one. If you want to disco, you'll have to make a brief trip across the river to Hull. There you'll find Valentino's and Sacs. These clubs are open until 3 AM, unlike those in Ottawa which close at 1 AM. There may be a weekend cover charge for Valentino's and Sacs (usually two dollars when it is on), and drinks are expensive (a beer goes for a dollar and a half a throw). Their sound and light systems are not as extensive as those you're probably used to, and you're certainly not going to hear Odyssey or Paul Jabara blaring out over the dance floor. (A disco medley of the Beatles tunes was quite popular last fall!) Those French-Canadian men with that delicious, faintly fractured English and all of those civil servant types so beautifully tailored make up for what is lacking. Is that an ambassador's son slouched over there against the wall? Remember you're in an international city.

And if you tire of chi-chi disco scenes and want to go slumming, there is the Coral Reef (the Coral Grief as some of the natives will have it) back in Ottawa proper.

Forbear and overcome that inbred Ottawan reserve, and you'll make some delightful friends on your visit there. You'll want to thank them for making Ottawa your moveable feast.

Nightclubs:

The Library and The Tavern Downstairs in the Lord Elgin Hotel at 100 Elgin

Coral Reef at 30 Nicholas Street

Valentino's at 106 Montcalm in Hull,

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A MATTER OF CHOICE

(Continued from page 42)

fore selecting the final 26 (that number is approximate) shown in the film.

They worked to enlarge the scope of the film, bringing more from each individual and from his material than would have resulted had the film been directed by only one person from the group. Dispensing with the hierarchy normally used in the production of a film, they had each member participate in all aspects of production: Camera operation, sound recording and interviewing (each interviewer was simultaneously camera operator as well). Over the year and a half before release, from some fifty hours of footage, the film was edited by four members from the group with frequent screenings and consultations among the entire group.

Throughout the process, various cuts were made after showings to predominantly gay audiences. At each screening, the filmmakers solicited response from the audience in the form of a questionnaire; in this way the larger community also helped to shape the film.

Financing the $250,000 project was as difficult as one might imagine. "We received a check from our last investor opening night in San Francisco," Peter says. "I spent a lot of the time looking to get money from foundations, but there was no money available, especially five years ago when the movement was newer and people were threatened by the prospect. Basically, we raised the money from private investors.

"We had very little support from rich gay people," he adds somewhat bitterly, "and very little from men in general. For instance, there's a group of gay businessmen in San Francisco. I went to them and showed them material. No support. I also went to the Tavern Guild which owns a hundred bars in San Francisco. When we screened for them, most of them walked out of the screening; they were not interested. I could not get any support from the so-called establishment. There were people who did help, such as Rick Stokes and George Menhenhall (both interviewee participants). Most of the money came from professional people, lawyers, psychiatrists, who had the money to invest and who felt that the film should be made."

There was even more bitterness that crept into Peter's voice when he began referring to a different kind of support and backing. "We have a lot to learn from women," he explains, "because they understand the necessity of support and men do not know how to do that. It sounds like a cliche, but it's true. Even in our own group, I think it was much harder for the three men to agree than the three women. Regarding the project in general, women were more helpful and supportive, in spite of the fact that women tend to have less money then men. Women also know how to give moral support, whereas men find it more difficult to be vulnerable.

"It doesn't mean that we accept less than the highest standards. As a matter of fact, gay people expect less from each other. For example, I went to a gay community group in Los Angeles and asked them if they'd be interested in supporting the film and helping, not necessarily financially. One gentleman said to me, 'No, we're not going to help you. Who do you think you are to be a spokesperson for the gay community?'

"The very next day CBS-TV called and asked for their cooperation in doing something and they said yes immediately. CBS, you see, is the big time; they're straight, so therefore they're going to make a good film as opposed to some faggot amateur filmmaker from San Francisco. But I guess we all do that. We all expect less from each other.

"It reminds me of a personal experience. A friend of mine asked me what I thought of a particular painting. I didn't care for it much and I told him so. He came back with a comment that I will never forget. He said, 'Yes, but it was done by a spastic.' Suddenly, the standards changed, and we do expect less.

"Also, relating to this, don't you very often want to know if someone is gay? Someone famous? We want to prove it to ourselves that someone out there who is doing it is gay. That's because we basically believe that we are not. If we really believe that we can be out there and successful, then we wouldn't have the need to constantly prove it to ourselves. Here it is,

(Continued on page 92)

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A MATTER OF CHOICE

(Continued from page 91)

I've done a film for the past five years and I still have the same need to prove it to myself."

If the film represents a revelation to straights, it also proved a learning experience to the filmmakers who deeply embedded their own lives into exploring other gay lives. Speaking from new-found perceptions, Peter Adair comments. "Throughout the making of this film, I have learned that a lot of people are very unconscious about their own lives, and I don't feel that gay people are really in touch with the fact that we are building our own culture. We have our bathhouses and bars, our own media, such as *Blueboy*. But prior, there were a great many restrictions. Now, with all of the new changes taking place, and with our new freedom, we have the responsibility to decide just who it is we want to be.

"Option is the important word. I think gay people have to understand that there are choices that can be made. There is nothing wrong with going to the bars so long as one realizes that there are other choices as well."

In the opinion of the filmmakers, their movie seems to have fairly captured the people that are featured. "No one is misrepresented," Robert Epstein claims. "Some come across as fuller people than others. But it's incredible when you take into account that the people are on screen an average of eight minutes each and you really feel as though you know them. The interviews were each conducted in the space of about two hours during one session. Yet, most people find that these people in the film linger on within them for days to come. Their images and what they have to say are churned around in one's mind."

Few of the interviewees had the opportunity of seeing themselves on screen until the film's opening. When questioned as to how he felt upon seeing himself on the screen, David Gillon (who in the film says, *"In high school I thought I was just one of those people who could never love anybody. When I fell in love with Henry, it meant I had incredibly deep emotions – it meant I was human."*) commented: "My first feeling when I saw myself in the film was that I had changed in the two and a half years that had transpired since participating. I must admit that there was a cer-

(Continued on page 97)

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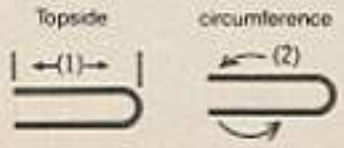

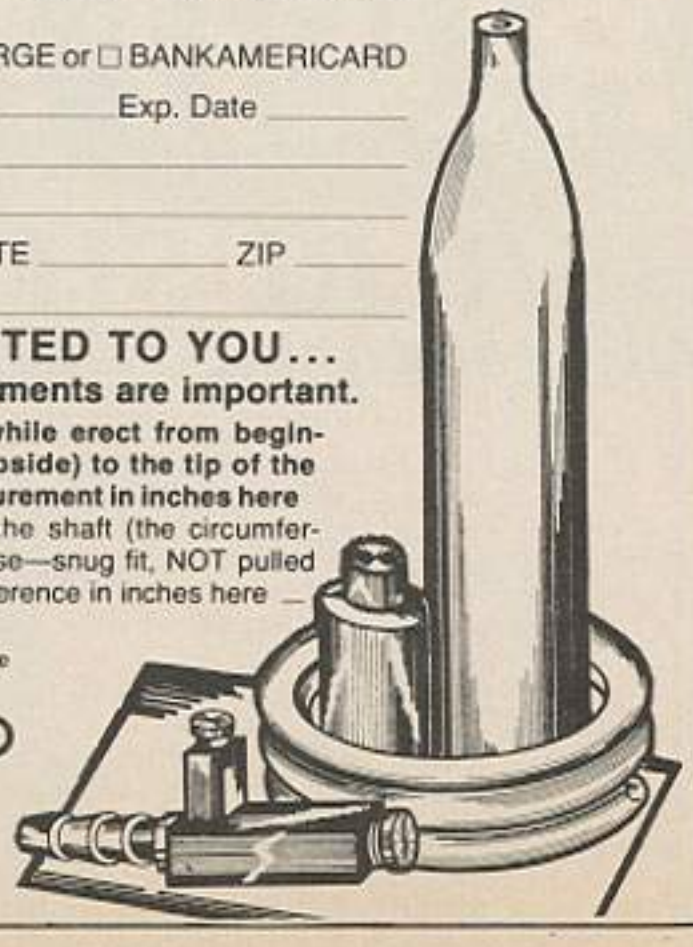

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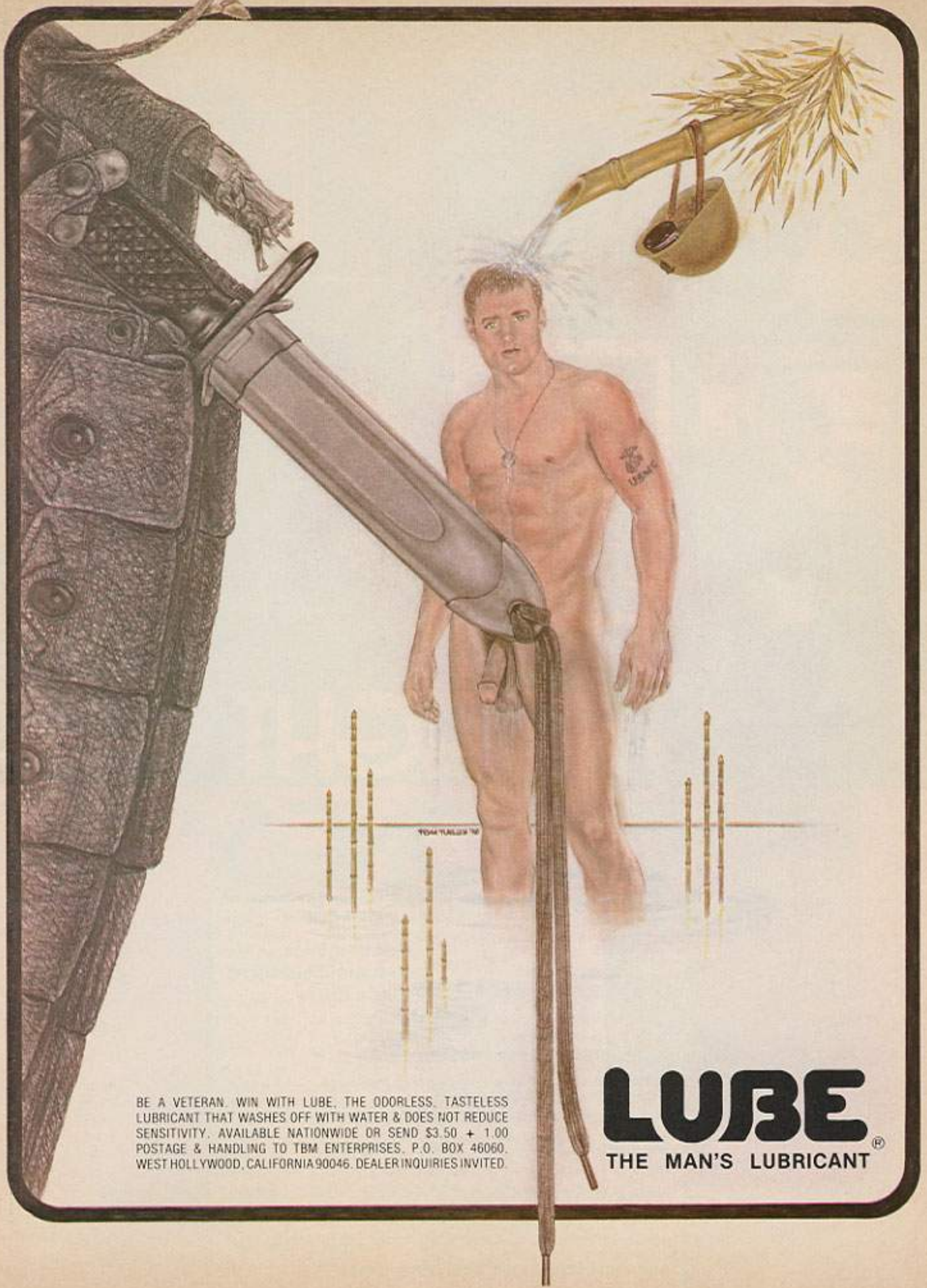

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B 2 5

A MATTER OF CHOICE

(Continued from page 92)

tain tinge when I saw just how innocent and naive I was. But that was me, at least certainly on that particular afternoon. I felt good about what I saw, and I feel that the film is a major effort that will set the groundwork for future endeavors of this kind."

Betty Powell, another participant *("Lesbians and gay men have a great deal to offer in terms of restructuring the world culture.")* admits that she was excited when she was approached by Veronica Selver to be a part of a film she thought was destined to be aired on the Public Broadcasting System. She never thought the film's potential was as commercial as the project turned out to become.

"I used the film," she explains, "as just another avenue for me to talk about my politics. What you saw in the film was just a secondary statement, in my mind. But friends explained to me that for the purposes of the film it was important that they chose what they did. If a black mother were to see the film, she could relate to me as a black lesbian. The politics would only have confused her, but in the film I was shown as a teacher, and the mother could understand that.

"The film captured an instance of me ... a piece of me that the filmmakers wanted. They wanted a touch of my humanity and that's what they focused on. Their purposes were achieved totally; they carried it off.

"The film can relate as well to anyone who is away from the center and who is considered eccentric. The gay culture especially is perhaps one of the most misunderstood, and the film helps to erase a morass of lies which has been propagated by the church. The film is a very human document and it shows each of us with our foibles, pimples, warts, as we are. I also thought that the pacing in the film was incredible; they never stayed too long on one subject, and they built up each subject. In the end, I feel the filmmakers have created a film that will only be the beginning of other such enterprises."

A telling comment was articulated by Mark Pinney *("I feel that radicals are necessary and that we are necessary.")* who was impressed generally by the film. "But" he explains, "I thought also that the women came across better than the men. The men seemed to all have a tinge of sorrow connected to them, whereas the women came across as fuller people. In a longer version of the film this was not the case. They added more people, therefore less of the original people were shown.

"I suppose that I was selected to represent the more bourgeoise aspect of gay society. I came to be in the film because a friend of mine suggested to Peter that I might know of some establishment-type gays, lawyers, doctors. At the end of my session with Peter, he asked if I would chose to be in the film. After some considerable thought, I agreed. I'm glad that I participated, but I just wish that a more dimensional view of the people was given, as opposed to racing through 26 individuals."

Pinney sees the film in the larger scope of events and feels that in that respect the film substantially opens the door to other such projects. In the scheme of things, he feels that the gay culture can be assimilated into the traditional structure of society if handled properly. His reason for appearing in the film: "I have a vested interest in gay liberation."

Roger Harkenrider *("I feel a responsibility to the other weird people of the world to be a representative intelligent weird person.")* talked in a somewhat subdued fashion, almost with a sense of regret as to the way he depicted himself on the screen. "I'm not altogether sure," he explained, "that I represented myself properly. However, I did feel that the film was well done, and in many instances moving and beautiful. In New York the crowd was big, but they were mostly gays. I'm not altogether sure that the film will get to the audience that it should."

Michael Mintz *("Being black made it very difficult to be gay, and vice versa.")* was somewhat surprised at what the filmmakers chose to show of him on film because much of what he spoke about during his two-hour session was concerned with gay discrimination on the Princeton campus. "I had a Gay Alliance sign hanging out my campus window," he said, "and that's how the film people got to talk with me. It caused quite a scandal at the time in Princeton, with rock throwing and stink bombs.

"With regards to the film specifically, I am incredibly proud of my participation and I feel it will have a positive impact on straights and even with other gays, in terms of reinforcing a positive gay image as opposed to thinking stereotypically. Very specifically, my mother will use the film to explain my homosexuality to my little brother. In that respect, it hits home beautifully and positively."

Much of the film is comprised of personal anecdotes from the featured individuals who talk about how they dealt with being gay and how they confronted this very personal issue. Turning the tables on the filmmakers, they were then asked, for the purposes of this article, to talk about their own experiences as though they

(Continued on page 98)

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A MATTER OF CHOICE *(Continued from page 97)*

were on camera.

Peter Adair was quick to point out: "I don't think I'd make a very good candidate for the film. Either I don't want to talk about it or I feel I have nothing interesting to say.

"Personally, I have been attracted to men from an early age. In high school, I was in love with another guy and we saw each other constantly for about six months. One day I confessed my feelings and he rejected me and that made things harder for me. I didn't really come out for about another five years, and I didn't even have sex for another three or four years; I was having sex on and off with women, but it was never terribly successful.

"My sister came out before I did. She came out before she even had sex. She called herself a virgin dyke. There was never any question in her mind, whereas I toyed with the idea of being bisexual. But slowly I've given up women and have taken up with men."

According to Peter, his parents took to their children's gayness without any awkwardness. "They encouraged us always," he explains, "to [illegible] ourselves. My mother, Casey, and my sister Nancy are writing a book about the making of the film, and I've just read my mother's opening which was very emotional for me."

Andrew Brown relates how he was early on very promiscuous, "but I stopped when I was 13 or 14. I remember when I stopped ... a friend was getting pubic hairs and I thought they were the strangest things. I didn't want to know about that; I didn't even know what pubic hairs were. I didn't have sex with men again until I was 23. I was very unhappy and my mother sat me down and said, 'You're unhappy; you're either shooting heroin or you're gay.' She just wanted me to be happy. When she said it, it was incredible, but it took me three or four years before I slept with a man. I was not into pursuing that sort of thing. It would happen when it would happen. It all came together and it's been great."

Robert Epstein talks in romantic terms about his first experience with a man when he was 19. "It happened on a Greek island. I was ready for an experience. I had girlfriends, but I knew that I was gay, yet I didn't acknowledge it. I guess I missed out on all of those wonderful childhood experiences. It was wonderful when it happened ... certainly worth the waiting. But then I freaked out and literally left the island that evening.

"I didn't deal with it properly, thinking that I might be bisexual. I left school and headed for California, hoping that distance would make things easier, and it did. That's when I heard about the film. I had accepted that I was sleeping with men so my commitment to the film was really my own growing up."

Perhaps America is growing up too. Certainly the critical and commercial acceptance of this film represents a step (the film will also be shown on Public Broadcasting sometime in October) toward a greater understanding of the gay culture. The limp-wristed stereotype will, hopefully, be revised in the times to come.

The filmmakers feel that their work offers, to the gay public especially, the understanding that there are options. If one chooses to begin and end his life in a gay bar, that's alright, but there are choices and variety out there as well, if one takes an active role in making things happen. Too many lives are involved in looking for Mister Right; looking implies a certain passivity, and as the gay culture comes into its own, more sophisticated avenues become available.

Indeed, the word is finally out that women can love other women; that men can love other men. And, hopefully, in times to come, that we can all learn to love each other. ■

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